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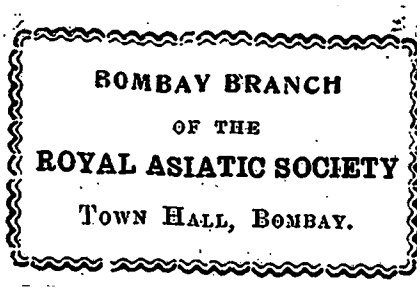

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ARCTIC JOURNAL

UNIFORM EDITION

OF

CAPTAIN SHERARD OSBORN'S WORKS,

IN THREE VOLUMES.

I.

STRAY LEAVES FROM AN ARCTIC JOURNAL; Or, Eighteen Months in the Polar Regions in Search of Sir John Franklin, in the years 1850-51.

THE CAREER, LAST VOYAGE, AND FATE OF Sir John Franklin.

II.

THE DISCOVERY OF A NORTH-WEST PASSAGE by H.M.S. 'Investigator,' Captain R. M'Clure, during the Years 1850-1851-1852-1853-1854. With Map.

III.

A CRUISE IN JAPANESE WATERS.

QUEDAH; Or, Stray Leaves from a Journal in Malayan Waters.

THE FIGHT ON THE PEIHO IN 1859.

STRAY LEAVES

FROM

AN ARCTIC JOURNAL

OR

EIGHTEEN MONTHS IN THE POLAR REGIONS IN SEARCH OF SIR JOHN FRANKLIN'S EXPEDITION IN 1850-51.

TO WHICH IS ADDED

THE CAREER, LAST VOYAGE, AND FATE OF CAPTAIN SIR JOHN FRANKLIN

60480

BY

CAPTAIN SHERARD OSBORN, C.B.
ROYAL NAVY

Rxd

NEW EDITION

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DEDICATION.

ACCEPT, my dear Lady Franklin, these few pages as a tribute of warm admiration for yourself and estimable niece, Miss Sophia Cracroft—admiration common to thousands, and pride that such as you are Englishwomen, and that a sailor's wife should so nobly have fulfilled her duty; for if, on the one hand, the name of Sir John Franklin, that chief "*sans peur et sans reproche*," is dearly associated with our recollections of the honours won in the ice-bound regions of the pole, your names are not the less so with the noble efforts made to rescue, or solve the fate of, our missing countrymen.

That those sacrifices, those untiring exertions, that zeal which has never wavered, that hope so steadfast, that patience under misconstruction, and that pity for the malicious, which you have so pre-eminently displayed, may yet, by God's help, one day reap its reward in the accomplishment of your wishes, is the fervent prayer of

SHERARD OSBORN.

FEBRUARY 1852.

PREFACE.

WITH the many of my cloth, my crime of writing a book will be an unpardonable one, and I cannot even conscientiously declare that it has been at the urgent desire of my friends that I have thus made my *début.*

My motive, however, is twofold—to tell of the doings of a screw steam-vessel, the first ever tried in the polar regions; and, by a light readable description of incidents in the late search for Sir John Franklin, to interest the community at large upon that subject. I have told facts as they have occurred; and I trust have, in doing so, injured no man. A journal would necessarily be a dry narration of facts; I have, therefore, thrown in here and there general observations and remarks founded upon such facts, rather than a dry repetition of them.

To the officers and men serving under my command, I can offer no higher compliment than in having thus placed their severe and zealous labours before the pub-

lic; and no professional reader who reads these 'Stray Leaves' can fail, I am certain, to perceive how heavily must have fallen the labours here recounted upon the men and officers of the steam-vessels, and how deep an obligation I, as one of the commanders, must be under to them for those untiring exertions, by which this, the first and severe trial of steam in the arctic regions was brought to a successful issue.

The "Resolutes," no doubt, will object to the round terms in which I have growled at the bluff-bowed vessel it was then my fate and now my pride to have towed so many miles in the frozen zone; but on second thoughts I doubt not they will acquit me, for they will remember the joke was once on their side; and if I do not love their *ship*, at any rate I liked *them*.

To those who may accuse me of egotism in confining my remarks so much to the achievements of my own vessel, I have merely to say that in doing so I was best able to be truthful; but that I am fully aware that, to the other screw steamer, the Intrepid, and my gallant friend and colleague Commander J. B. Cator, there fell an equal amount of labour; and that to all, ships as well as steamers, there fell an equal proportion of hardship, danger, and privation. I should indeed be forgetful as well as ungrateful did I here fail to acknowledge the more than kindness and assistance I have ever experienced from my dear friend Mr Barrow, a name past

and present inseparably connected with our arctic discoveries; so likewise I have to offer my thanks, heartfelt as they are sincere, to those who, like Admiral Sir Francis Beaufort, and Captain Hamilton of the Admiralty, bade me speed, when sincerity and zeal were my only claims upon their sympathy.

RICHMOND, *Feb.* 15, 1852.

STRAY LEAVES

FROM

AN ARCTIC JOURNAL.

THE evils attendant on a hurried outfit and departure were in nowise mitigated in the case of the Royal Naval Expedition, fitted out at Woolwich in 1850, to search for Sir John Franklin's squadron; and a general feeling of relief at our departure prevailed amongst the officers, when, one fine morning, we broke ground from Greenhithe.

The Resolute and Assistance had a couple of steamers to attend upon them; whilst we, the Pioneer and Intrepid, screwed and sailed as requisite to keep company. By dark of the 4th of May 1850 we all reached an anchorage near Yarmouth, and the first stage of our outward journey was over.

No better proof of the good feeling which animated our crews can be adduced than the unusual fact of not

a man being missing amongst those who had originally entered. Not a desertion had taken place—not a soul had attempted to quit the vessels after six months' advance had been paid.

Here and there amongst the seamen a half-sleepy indifference to their work was observable. This I imputed to the reaction after highly sentimental "farewells," in which, like other excesses, Jack delights; the women having, as usual, done all they could, by crying alongside, to make the men believe they were running greater risks than had ever been before undergone by Arctic navigators.

The old seamen's ditty of

> "We sailed by Fairlēe, by Beachēy, and Dungĕness,
> Until the North Foreland light we did see,"

gives a very good idea of our progress from beacon to lighthouse, and lighthouse to headland, until the lofty coast of Yorkshire sank under the lee; and by the 8th of May the squadron was making slow progress across the mouth of the Firth of Forth. Hitherto "all had been pleasant as a marriage-bell;" the weather had been fine; and we already calculated our days of arrival at different points, as if the calm was to last for ever. The Cheviot Hills glittered in the south; it was the kind good-bye of our own dear England. Hundreds of white sails dotted a summer sea: all was joyous and sparkling. Scotland greeted us with a rough "nor'-wester,"—and away we went. "Not all the king's horses" could have kept the expedition together.

The Resolute and Assistance, hauled dead on a wind

under close-reefed topsails, performed a stationary movement called "pile-driving" by sailors, which would, as the pilot suggested, if the breeze lasted, put them to the coast of Holland. The two steam-vessels, under fore-and-aft canvass, drew rapidly away to windward and ahead, and, in spite of all we could do, a few hours of darkness effectually succeeded in dispersing the squadron. Accident again brought the Pioneer in sight of the Resolute for a few hours; but the Intrepid found herself in Stromness harbour with a degree of celerity that awakened a racing disposition on the part of my gallant colleague, Intrepid *versus* Pioneer, which it took a great many days of competition to decide.

They who want excitement had better go and beat a vessel up the Pentland Firth against both wind and tide. I tried it, but shall not repeat the experiment; and, after a thorough good shaking in the North Sea, was not sorry to find myself at anchor in Stromness.

The very proper and very *triste* Sabbath of the North was followed by a busy Monday. The arrival of so many gold cap-bands, and profusion of gilt buttons, interfered, I fear, materially with the proper delivery of the morning milk and butter by sundry maidens with golden locks; and the purser's wholesale order for beef threatened to create a famine in the Orkneys. The cheapness of whisky threatened to send us to sea with our men in a lamentable state of drunkenness, and rather prejudiced me against Stromness; but if it had no other redeeming quality, all its faults would be forgotten in the astounding fact that *there* the mariner may find a landlady with moderate prices and really fresh eggs.

A description of this part of the world is no part of my task. I will pass over our long and crooked walk about Stromness; and the failure of the good folk there to induce us to trust ourselves on their ponies for a ride to Kirkwall, naturally limited our knowledge of the neighbourhood.

Above the town of Stromness rises a conical-shaped hill; it has, I believe, been immortalised by Scott in his 'Pirate:' it had yet deeper interest for me, for I was told that up it had toiled dear friends now missing with Franklin. I and a shipmate walked out one evening to make our pilgrimage to a spot hallowed by the visit of the gallant and true-hearted that had gone before us; and as, amid wind and drizzle, we scrambled up the hill, I pictured to myself how, five short years before, those we were now in search of had done the same. Good and gallant Gore! chivalrous Fitz-James! enterprising Fairholme! lion-hearted Hodgson! dear Des Vœux!—Oh that ye knew help was nigh!

We surmounted the hill—the Atlantic was before us, fierce and troubled; afar to seaward the breakers broke and lashed themselves against the firm foundation of the old Head of Hoy, which loomed through mist and squall; whilst overhead the scream of sea-fowl, flying for shelter, told that the west wind would hold wild revelry that night.

"H.M.S. North Star," carved on the turf, showed where some of her people had chosen this spot for a record of their visit to Orkney. We did likewise, in honour of our own bonnie craft; then strolled homeward, discussed the probable chances of the existence

of the said North Star; and arrived at the conclusion that there was more cause for anxiety on her account than for Franklin's Expedition, she having gone out totally unprepared for wintering, and with strict injunctions not to be detained: "l'Amirauté propose, et Dieu dispose." *

I could have hugged the snuffy old postmaster for a packet of letters he gave me. I rushed on board to a cabin which proved, as the First Lord had sagaciously remarked, into how small a space a Lieutenant-commanding could be packed, and revelled in sweet and pleasant dreams.

Next day Lieutenant Cator and I started for our last point of departure for the great Nor'-West, a spot in the Orkneys well known to our arctic fishermen and navigators, and very appropriately called the Long-Hope. On May 15th the arctic squadron weighed, and, passing out of the Pentland Firth, the Dasher and Lightning cheered us, took our letters,—and Captain Austin's Searching Expedition was alone steering for Greenland. Night threw her mantle around us; the lonely light of Cape Wrath alone indicating where lay our homes. I like losing sight of Old England by night. It is pleasant to go to rest with a sweet recollection of some quiet scene you have just dwelt upon with delight, the spirit yearning for the excitement and novelty ahead. You rise in the morning, old Ocean is around you: there is,

* The North Star, an old sailing donkey-frigate, did nigh come to grief off the coast of Greenland, and was obliged to winter in 75° N. lat. She came home the same summer, 1850, that we entered the ice.

to the seaman, a lullaby, say what they may, in his hoarse song; and they of the middle watch tell how the friendly light of some distant cape glimmered and danced in the east, until lost in some passing squall.

Now for the North-West! we exclaimed,—its much-talked-of dangers—its chapter of horrors! As gallant Frobisher says, "it is *still* the only thing left undone, whereby a notable mind might be made famous and remarkable." As it was in Frobisher's day, so it is now, unless Franklin has accomplished it, and lies beset off the coast of Asia—and why may it not be so?

Whilst the squadron progresses slowly towards Cape Farewell, the ships under topsails and the steamers under jury-masts and sails, we will take a retrospective view of what was now (1850) going to be done for the relief of Franklin.

Captain Collinson, with two ships, has gone to Behring's Straits, with the Plover as a depôt in Kotzebue Sound, to fall back upon in case of disaster. He steers direct for Melville Island along the coast of North America.* Captain Pullen, having successfully searched the coast from Point Barrow to the Mackenzie River, is endeavouring now to push from thence, in a northerly direction, for Bank's Land. Dr Rae is to do the same from the Coppermine River. Captain Penny, a first-rate whaling captain, with two fast brigs, is now ahead of us,

* One of these ships subsequently, under Captain Sir Robert M'Clure, reached within sight of Sir Edward Parry's farthest point—Melville Island; and the gallant leader and crew actually passed home over the frozen sea, until shipped again at Beechey Island. Thus they travelled for the first in Arctic discovery from the Pacific to the Atlantic Ocean—from Behring's Straits to England!

hoping to make an early passage across the middle ice of Baffin's Bay. He goes to Jones's Sound and Wellington Channel, to reach the Parry Isles by a northern route.

We go with two sailing-ships and two steam-vessels, so as to form separate divisions of two vessels each, to examine Barrow's Straits south-westerly to Cape Walker, westerly towards Melville Island, and north-westerly up Wellington Channel. Thus no less than eight fine ships flying the pendant, and two land-parties, are directed by different routes on Melville Island. Besides these, an American expedition, fitted out by that prince of merchants, Mr Grinnell, leaves shortly for the same destination; and in Lady Franklin's own vessel, the Prince Albert, as well as a craft under Sir John Ross, we find two more assistants in the plan of search.

And yet, if we turn to the papers of the fall of 1849, you will find some asserting that Sir John Franklin had perished in Baffin's Bay, because Sir James Ross had found nothing of him in Lancaster Sound! Happily the majority of Englishmen have, however, decided otherwise; and behold this noble equipment! this magnificent outlay of men and material!

We will not dwell on the pleasures or annoyances of the cruise across the Atlantic, beyond stating the fact that our bluff-bowed worse-halfs, the sailing-ships, nigh broke our hearts, as well as our hawsers, in dragging them along in the calms; and that we of the screws found our steam-vessels all we could wish, somewhat o'er lively, mayhap, with a frisky tendency to break every breakable article on board. But there was a saucy swagger in them, as they bowled along the hollow of a western sea,

which showed they had good blood in them; and we soon felt confident of disappointing those polar seers who had foretold shipwreck and disaster as their fate.

The appearance of numerous sea-birds—the tern especially, which do not fly far from land—warned us, on Sunday 26th May, of our fast approach to Greenland, and on the morrow we espied the picturesque shores about Cape Farewell. Which of all the numerous headlands we saw was the identical Cape I do not pretend to say; but we chose, as *our* Cape Farewell, a remarkable-looking peak, with a mass of rock perched like a pillar upon its crest. The temperature began to fall as we advanced, and warmer coats quickly replaced our English clothing.

Distant as we were from Greenland, the view of its southern extremity was fleeting, but sufficient to show that it fully realised in appearance the most striking accumulation of ice and land that the mind could picture,—a land of gaunt famine and misery, but which nevertheless, for some good purpose, it had pleased Providence in a measure to people.

Had we not had an urgent duty to perform, I should have regretted thus hurrying past the land, for there was much to see there. Greenland is replete with historical and geographical interest; a weird and strange land full of strange sights, and associated with our past history of nautical adventure and present mission of humanity. Looking on that land, who could forget Scandinavia and her bold seamen—the skill and intrepidity of her bold Vikings—their colonies in Snæland, our Iceland—their discovery of Greenland—and

the legend of the pirate Biarni, who forestalled even the great Columbus in his discovery,—were not all associated with the region through which we were now sailing?

Without compass, without chart, full three centuries before the Genoese crossed the Atlantic, the Norsemen, in frail and open barks, braved the dark and angry sea, which was so sorely tossing even our proud vessels; and, unchecked by tempest, by ice, or hardship, penetrated, and left their mark, as far as we could in the present day. This, and much more, throws a halo around this lonely land. Nowhere else shall we find on such a scale, and so accessible, the strange phenomena of the poles of our earth—mighty glaciers, covering the areas of European kingdoms, creeping on to the sea from their mountain cradles, ever moving and pulverising the primitive rocks beneath in their irresistible march. Then we have the deep and picturesque fiord pent up between precipices huge, bleak, and barren, with the blue summer sea dotted here and there with ice in all its shapes of iceberg, floe, and pack. Beyond all this, still more strange, there lies in the heart of Greenland a region belted with black lava (the remains of ancient volcanic action) and impassable glaciers, whence issue in swarms the fleet reindeer for a season. That "unknown land" the Scandinavians, three centuries ago, looked upon with awe, and the Esquimaux of to-day turns from it trembling, and tells in legends of a giant race with blue eyes which is supposed to haunt it. And, lastly, we have throughout the coasts of Greenland strange ruined traces of ancient Scandinavian discovery, as well as those of the present expiring race of Esqui-

maux. Dullard must he be who sees not much to interest him in Greenland.

Thanks to an immense deal of water and very little ice, the steamers eventually towed the Resolute and the transport (a lively specimen of the genus) into the Whalé Fish Islands — a group of rocky islets some twenty miles distant from the excellent Danish harbour of Godhaab on the island of Disco.

We did as our forefathers had always done in anchoring at the Whale Fish Islands, but would strongly recommend others who visit this neighbourhood to go to Godhaab rather. Its anchorage is good, communication with Europe a certainty, and the hospitality of the Danish residents, few though they be, cheering and pleasant to arctic wanderers.

Having thus expressed my total dissent from those who, with steam-vessels, go to Whale Fish Isles, it will be but fair for me to say that I arrived at this our first stage in the journey to the Nor'-West in far from good-humour. We had been twenty-four days from Greenhithe to Cape Farewell, and sixteen days from the latter point to our anchorage; hurry being out of the question when a *thing* like the Emma Eugenia was pounding the water in a trial of speed with perfect snuff-boxes like the Resolute and Assistance. Patience and a four-day tow had at last finished the work: and to all our anxious inquiries about the prospect of the season, as to where Penny was, and whether any intelligence of Franklin had reached the settlements, not an answer was to be obtained from a Danish carpenter, whose knowledge appeared to be limited to a keen idea of

changing, under a system he called "Trock," sundries, with which the Danske Kœing had intrusted him, into blubber and seal-oil.

After a day of coal-dust, I proceeded with some others to see what was to be seen, and to load, as we were taught to believe, a boat with wild-fowl. The principal settlement having been pointed out, we landed on the slope of one of the islands, on which a coarse rank vegetation, existed amongst the numerous relics of departed seals, sacrificed to the appetites of the Esquimaux and the *trocking* of the Governor, as he was facetiously styled. That individual soon appeared, and, in spite of copious libations of Her Britannic Majesty's "pure Jamaica," of which he had partaken, was most polite and hospitable. From him I discovered that he and a cooper were the only Danes residing here; and they, together with a cross-breed who did the double duty of priest and schoolmaster, constituted the officials of Cron-Prin's Islands. The native population amounted perhaps to one hundred souls; and it was in supplying their wants, and in affording a market for their superfluous skins and blubber, that the Danes derived a profit, under a strict system of monopoly. No foreigner is allowed to trade with the Esquimaux, and they, on the other hand, have strict injunctions to lodge everything they do not require for private use in the public store. The quantity of seal-blubber in store, which was equal to as much oil, amounted to nigh upon 100 tons. The number of seals annually destroyed in Disco Bay for "trock" and food must be enormous.

The Esquimaux appeared all comfortable and well-to-

do, well clad, cleanly, and fat. Most of them had moved for a while into their summer lodges, which consist of little else than a seal-skin tent clumsily supported with sticks. They were more than sufficiently warm; and the number of souls inhabiting one of these lodges appeared only to be limited by the circle of friends and connections forming a family. The winter abode—formed almost underground—appeared decidedly well adapted to afford warmth, and some degree of pure ventilation, in so severe a climate, where fuel can be spared only for culinary purposes; and I was glad to see that, although necessity obliges those Esquimaux to eat of the oil and flesh of the seal and narwhal, yet, when they could procure it, they seemed fully alive to the gastronomic pleasures of a good wholesome meal off fish, birds' eggs, bread, sugar, tea, and coffee.

Their canoes are perfect models of beauty and lightness; in no part of the world do we see them excelled in speed and portability—two very important qualities in the craft of a savage; and in ornamental workmanship the skill of both men and women is tastefully displayed.

The clothing of the Greenland Esquimaux is vastly superior to anything we could produce, both in lightness of material and wind-and-water-tight qualities; the material, seal and deer skin and entrails, manufactured by the women, their needles of Danish manufacture, their thread the delicate sinews of animals. We gladly purchased all we could obtain of their clothing.

Every one has heard of the horrors of an Esquimaux existence,—sucking blubber instead of roast-beef, oil

their usual beverage, and a seal their *bonne-bouche;* the long gloomy winter spent in pestiferous hovels, lighted and warmed with whale-oil lamps; the narrow gallery for an entrance, along which the occupant creeps for ingress and egress. This and much more has been told us; yet, now that I have seen it all—the Esquimaux's home, the Esquimaux's mode of living, and the Esquimaux himself—I see nothing so horrible in one or the other.

The whaler from bonnie Scotland or busy Hull, fresh from the recollection of his land and home, no doubt shudders at the comparative misery and barbarity of these poor people; but those who have seen the degraded Bushmen of South Africa, the miserable Patanies of Malayia, the Fuegians of our southern hemisphere, and remember the comparative blessings afforded by climate to those melancholy specimens of the human family, will, I think, exclaim with me, that the Esquimaux of Greenland are as superior to them in mental capacity, manual dexterity, physical enterprise, and social virtues, as the Englishman is to the Esquimaux.

The strongest symptom perceptible in the Greenlanders of the advantage of the religious instruction afforded by the Moravian missionaries, is in the respect they show for the marriage-tie, and strong affection for their children. The missionary, with this race, appears to have had few difficulties to contend with: naturally gentle, and without any strong superstitious prejudices, they receive without resistance the simple creed of Reformed religion which he has spread amongst them.

An old man I pressed to accompany me as pilot to

the island of Disco, declined under the plea that his wife was very ill, and that there was no one but himself to take care of the "piccaninny." Interested from such proper feeling in the man, Doctor Pickthorne and I entered his winter abode, which he apologised for taking us to, the illness of his "cara sposa" having prevented him changing his residence for the usual summer tent. Crawling on all-fours through a narrow passage, on either side of which a dog-kennel and a cook-house had been constructed, we found ourselves in an apartment, the highest side of which faced us, the roof gradually sloping down to the ground.

Along one side of the abode a sort of bedplace extended for its whole length, forming evidently the family couch; on one end of it, with her head close to a large seal-oil lamp, was the sick woman. She was at the usual Esquimaux female's employment of feeding the flame with a little stick from a supply of oil, which would not rise of its own accord up the coarse and ill-constructed wick; over the flame was a compound, which the sufferer told us was medicine for her complaint,—the rheumatism, a very prevalent one amongst these people. Leaving the kind Doctor to do the part of a good Samaritan, I amused myself with looking over the strange home into which I had got. The man took much pride in showing me his family, consisting of a girl and three fine boys. His wife, he assured me, was only twenty-eight years of age—she looked at least six-and-thirty; and he likewise, though only thirty-four, had the appearance of being at least ten years older. They had married when she was twenty—the usual age

for marriage, as he told me. His daughter, rather a pretty and slight-made girl, was very busy making shoes for her brothers out of cured skin. I rewarded the youthful sempstress by giving her one of a number of dolls kindly sent me for the purpose by Mrs Washington; and could that lady have seen the joyful countenance of the Esquimaux child, she would indeed have been richly remunerated for her thoughtful little addition to my stock of presents. To finish my Esquimaux tale, I was next day not a little surprised at the father coming on board, and giving me a small seal-skin pouch which his child had sewn for me in return for my present. This proved at least that Esquimaux children can appreciate kindness as well as European ones.

The Whale Fish Group consists of a congeries of islets, of various shapes and sizes, with deep-water channels between; the whole of granitic formation, with broad veins of quartz and masses of gneiss overlying in various directions. Those I visited exhibited proof of constant and, I might say, rapid disintegration, from the action of water and frost. The southern and south-west sides of the larger islands were of 300 or 400 feet elevation, with a gradual dip to the north-east, as if their creation had been brought about by some submarine agency upheaving the primary rock, with an irregular force, in a north-east and south-west direction.

The tallest cliffs were rent from crown to base, and frost-cracks intersected one another in such a perfect labyrinth that the whole mass appeared as if merely hanging together from its stupendous weight. The narrow bays and bights with a southern aspect, where

the concussion of a heavy sea had had its effect, were strewn with the wreck of the adjacent precipices, and progress for sportsmen along the shore, in pursuit of wild fowl, was extremely difficult. On the northern sides, facing the polar ice-drift, these islands showed other features quite as peculiar to the glacial region upon which we were wandering: there the low projecting ledges of granite were polished by the constant attrition of oceanic ice and icebergs, until walking over them became barely possible.

July 18, 1850.—I am much amused at the ease with which we assimilate ourselves to new climates and new habits. Yesterday, Pickthorne and I bathed within fifty yards of an iceberg, the water only two degrees above freezing-point. Candour must acknowledge we did not stay long: and to-night, though no Highlander in love of hardship, I found myself at midnight in the water groping for lost gun-gear, an experiment which, having escaped from it without rheumatism, I promise not to repeat. One of my crew slept last night on deck with his arm for a pillow, although the temperature was below freezing-point; and every one complains of heat, and throws aside jacket and cap when making the slightest exertion.

Coal-dust everywhere, and on everything. Incessant work from 4 A.M. to 8 or 9 o'clock P.M., one would have supposed, would have induced rational beings to go quietly to bed when the day's work was over. It was far otherwise. The novelty of constant daylight, and the effect which it always has upon the system, until accustomed to it, of depriving one of the inclination to

go to roost at regular hours, told upon us; and often have I found myself returning from five hours' work, chasing, shooting, and pulling a boat, just as the boatswain's mates were piping "stow hammocks!" That I was not singular, a constant discharge of guns throughout the night well proved, and unhappy nights must the ducks and dovekies have spent during our stay.

Although the proceeds of great consumption of powder were but small, nevertheless stout men, who had not buttoned a gaiter since their youth, were to be seen rivalling chamois-hunters in the activity with which they stalked down the lady ducks on their nests. Apoplexy was forgotten, the tender wife's last injunction on the subject of dry feet pitched to the winds; and rash men of five-and-forty pulled and shot little birds, in leaky punts, with all the energy of boys of fifteen.

There were vile realities, however, connected with our duties—as well cold fingers and wet feet—otherwise I should have been prone to give fancy her swing, and spent many a night in the "blest ideal," at the beautiful and novel scenes around us. One lovely morning at two o'clock, I had just crossed to the north side of an island which faces Greenland, and passed a quiet and secluded bay, at whose head the remains of a deserted ruin told of the bygone location of some Esquimaux fishermen, whose present home was shown by here and there a grave carefully piled over with stones to ward off dog and bear. All was silent, except the plaintive mew of the arctic sea-swallow as it wheeled over my

head, or the gentle echo made by mother ocean as she rippled under some projecting ledge of ice. The snow, as it melted amongst the rocks behind, stole quietly on to the sea through a mass of dark-coloured moss; whilst a scanty distribution of pale or delicately-tinted flowers showed the humble flora of the north. The sun sweeping along the heavens opposite at a very low altitude, gilded, as it rose, the snowy crests of the mountains of Disco, and served to show, more grim and picturesque, the naturally dark face of the "Black Land of Lively." From thence round to the east, in the far horizon, swept the shores of Greenland, its glaciers, peaks, and headlands, all tortured by mirage into a thousand fantastic shapes, as if Dame Nature had risen from her couch in frolicsome mood. Between this scene and my feet icebergs of every size and shape, rich with fretting of silvery icicle, and showing the deepest azure tint or richest emerald, strewed a mirror-like sea, glowing with the pale pink of morning.

The awful silence was impressive: unwilling to break it I sat me down.

> "I felt her presence by its spell of might,
> Stoop o'er me from above—
> The calm majestic presence of the night,
> As of the one I love."

Suddenly a distant roar boomed along the water and echoed amongst the rocks: again and again I heard it, when, to my astonishment, a huge iceberg in the offing commenced to break up. A fearful plunge of some large mass would clothe the spot in spray and foam; a dull reverberating echo pealed on; and then, merely

from the concussion of the still air, piece after piece detached itself from the iceberg, and the work of demolition was most rapid. Truly did Baffin boast that he had laid open one of nature's most wonderful laboratories; and I thought with Longfellow, in his 'Hyperion,'—"The vast cathedral of nature is full of holy scriptures and shapes of deep mysterious meaning: all is solitary and silent there. Into this vast cathedral comes the human soul seeking its Creator, and the universal silence is changed to sound, and the sound is harmonious, and has a meaning, and is comprehended and felt."

After many difficulties, which called for some obstinacy on my part to master, I was allowed to go to Disco, and Captain Ommaney, hearing of my intention, kindly made up a party. Taking one of our boats, we shipped an Esquimaux pilot, called "Frederick," and started on June 21, at two o'clock in the morning. To all our inquiries about Disco, Frederick had but one reply,—"By-and-by you see." He liked rum and biscuit, and was only to be animated by the conversation turning upon seals, or *pousseys*, as the natives call them. Then, indeed, Frederick's face was wreathed in smiles, or rather its oleaginous coat of dirt cracked in divers directions, his tiny eyes twinkled, and he descanted, in his broken jargon, upon the delights of *poussey* with far more unction than an alderman would upon turtle. After threading the islets we struck to the north-east, by compass, from the northernmost rock of the group, which our guide assured us would sink below the horizon the moment of our arrival off Godhaab. He was perfectly right; for after four hours' pulling and sailing we found

ourselves under a small look-out house, and the islets of our departure had dipped.

Entering a long and secure harbour, we reached a perfectly landlocked basin: in it rode a couple of Danish brigs, just arrived from Copenhagen with stores for the settlement; and on the shores of this basin the Danish settlement of Godhaab was situated: a few stores, and the residence of two or three officials—gentlemen who superintended the commercial monopoly to which I have before referred—a flag-staff, and some half-dozen guns, formed the sum total.

Landing at a narrow wooden quay, close to which natives and sailors were busy unlading boats, we found ourselves amongst a rambling collection of wooden houses, built in Dano-Esquimaux style, with some twenty native lodges intermixed. Very few persons were to be seen moving about: we heard afterwards that the body of natives were seal-catching to the northward. A troop of half-caste boys and girls served, however, to represent the population, and in them the odd mixture of the Mongolian with the Scandinavian race was advantageously seen.

A Danish seaman conducted us to the residence of the chief official, and, at the early hour of six, we made a formal visit.

His mansion was of wood, painted black, with a red border to the windows and roof—no doubt so decorated for a good purpose; but the effect was more striking than pleasing. A low porch with double doors, two sharp turns in a narrow dark passage—to baffle draughts, no doubt—and we found ourselves in a comfortable

room with Herr Agar smoking a cigar, and gaily attired to receive us. The "Herr" spoke but little English—we no Danish: however, the quiet and reserved manner of the good northern did not conceal a certain kindness of which he soon gave us hospitable proof; for, on acceding to his offer of a little coffee, we were surprised to see a nice tidy lady, his wife, as he informed us, spread a breakfast fit for a Viking, and then with gentle grace she ably did the honours of her board. Hang me, when I looked at the snow-white linen, the home-made cleanly cheer, the sweet wife all kindness and anxiety, I half envied the worthy Dane the peace and contentment of his secluded lot, and it needed not a glass of excellent Copenhagen schiedam to throw a *couleur de rose* about this Ultima Thule of dear woman's dominion.

The morning pull had given a keenness to our appetites, and I have a general recollection of rye bread, Danish cake, excellent Zetland butter, Dutch cheese, luscious ham, boiled potatoes, and Greenland trout fresh from the stream. Could sailors ask for or need more? I can only say that we all *felt* that, if Herr Agar and Madame Agar (I hate that horrid word Frau) would only borrow our last shilling, we were ready to lend it.

A broken conversation ensued—a little English and much Danish—when Dr Donnet fortunately produced Captain Washington's Esquimaux vocabulary, and, aided by the little son of our host, we soon twisted out all the news Herr Agar had to give.

Captain Penny had only stayed a short time. He arrived on May the 4th. The prospect of an early

and open season in the ice was said to be most cheering; and then the worthy Herr produced a piece of paper directed to myself by my gallant friend Penny. He wrote in haste to say his squadron had arrived all well after a splendid run from Aberdeen: he was again off, and sent kind remembrances, dated May 4.

This, at any rate, was joyful intelligence, and worth my journey to Disco; my heart leaped with joy, and I thought, at any rate, if we were late, he was full early.

After a long chat we went for a stroll, in which a tree—yes! as I live, a tree—was discovered. Be not envious, ye men of Orkney; it stood full thirteen inches high, and was indigenous, being the dwarf birch-tree, the monarch of an arctic forest! Stumbling upon the churchyard I should have indulged my taste for old tombstones, had not the musquitoes forbidden it; and, with a hurried glance at the names of old hunters of fish, and departed Danes and Dutchmen, I ran for the beach, remarking that, whereas we in Europe evince respect for those who have preceded us to that bourne,

> "Where life's long journey turns to sleep,
> Nor weary pilgrim wakes to weep,"

by placing stones around their last homes, in Greenland pieces of soft and ugly wood are substituted, although nature has strewn on every side masses of granite fit to form mausoleums for Pharaohs. Bad taste! I exclaimed; but that's not confined to Disco.

Having promised to return to say good-bye, we kept our word most willingly, and found "Herr Agar" had a circle of friends to meet us; and my astonishment was

great at the sight of *two more petticoats*. One was the wife of a Moravian missionary, and the other the wife of a gentleman at Jacob's Sound. They looked perfectly happy, and at least appeared as well at home in the dreary region which had become their adopted country as we could expect or their husbands desire. Conversation soon flagged; the missionary gave it up in despair; the "Herr" smoked in silence; and but for the ladies we should have been soon dumb. Happily for me (for I wanted to purchase some seal-skins), a captain of one of the brigs came in at the moment, and, understanding both English and Danish, conversation became quite animated. Watching my opportunity, I told him of my desire to purchase seal-skins for trousers for my men; he immediately informed Herr Agar, who gave him a yah! and walked me off by the arm to his storerooms, followed by his good lady. Lifting a bundle of beautiful seal-skins, the Herr made me an offer of them. I commenced fumbling for my purse, and at last produced some gold, making signs that various officers intended to have seal-skin trousers. Nay! nay! exclaimed the good lady, thrusting back my money, whilst the Herr began loading me with skins. Oh! the horror of that moment: I felt as if I had been begging, and must have looked very like it, for Mrs Agar, with a look of sudden inspiration, as if she perfectly understood me, ran off to her husband's wardrobe, and produced a pair of trousers of perfect Dutch dimensions, and, with the most innocent smile, made signs of how I should pull them on. I smiled, for they would have made a suit of clothes for me.

Seeing no way of getting out of the scrape my ignor-

ance of Danish and their generosity had led me into, I determined to take as little as possible, and, with a thousand thanks, walked back to the drawing-room with Herr Agar's "whisperables" on one arm and a couple of seal-skins on the other, my face burning and my conscience smiting.

Time pressed, and we bade our kind friends good-bye. Herr Agar fired a salute of three guns, which we returned with three cheers; and, after taking a stirrup-cup on board the Peru, started for Whale Fish Islands, which we reached at eleven o'clock at night, much pleased with our excursion.

Every one likes a souvenir of some pleasant bygone scene or event: naval souvenirs are often odd ones. A messmate of mine used to tell of Greece, her temples and ruins,—"he had had many a pleasant snooze amongst them!" Another dwelt on the scenes of Montezuma's sorrows, for it was there he had partaken of most savoury wild fowl; and yet another hero knew but of Peru and Pizarro's triumphs by the markets producing very good cray-fish; whilst I must plead guilty to associating occasionally Greenland and the deeds of Scandinavian heroes with the worthy Herr Agar's seal-skin trousers.

Amidst a last flourish of coals and dust, which left our steamers filled to repletion—indeed we were just awash—we were ordered to take the ships in tow, and start; this done, I came to a virtuous resolution in my own mind, after what I was going through in dragging my "fat friend," the Resolute, about, to think twice ere I laughed at those whom fate had shackled to a mountain of flesh.

When I had time to ask the day and date, it was Sunday, 28th June 1850, and we had turned our back on the last trace of civilised man. *Vogue la galère!*

The night was serenely calm. We skirted the black land of Disco, making an average speed of three miles per hour, so that our fearful load of coal—full three hundred tons—did not diminish the speed nearly as much as I at first anticipated: although I could not but feel, from our staggering motion and bad steerage, that the poor Pioneer was severely taxed in carrying her own dead weight of about five hundred tons, and towing a clumsy craft, which fully equalled another seven hundred tons, all this mass receiving vitality from two little engines of thirty-horse power each.

Whilst a sudden and rattling breeze from the south caused us to make sail and run merrily past the striking clifts of the Waigat and Jacob's Sound, I will briefly refer to the character of the vessels composing our squadron—their equipment and general efficiency.

The Resolute and Assistance were sailing ships rigged as barks—their hulls strengthened according to the most orthodox arctic rules, until, instead of presenting the appearance of a body intended for progress through the water, they resembled nothing so much as very ungainly knife-trays, and their bows formed a buttress which rather pushed the water than passed through it. The remark made by an old seaman who had grown grey amongst the ice, was often recalled to my mind, as with an aching heart, for many a long mile, I dragged the clumsy Resolute about. "Lord, sir! you would think, by the quantity of wood they are putting into *them* ships,

that the dockyard maties believed they could stop the Almighty from moving the floes in Baffin's Bay! Every pound of African oak they put into them the less likely they are to rise to pressure; and you must in the ice either rise or sink. If the floe cannot pass through the ship it will go over it."

Internally the fittings of the ships were most perfect: nothing had been spared to render them the most comfortable vessels that ever went out avowedly to winter in the polar ice. Hot air was distributed by means of an ingenious apparatus throughout lower deck and cabins. Double bulkheads and doors prevented the ingress of unnecessary cold air. A cooking battery, as the French say, promised abundance of room for roasting, boiling, baking, and an arrangement for thawing snow to make water for our daily consumption. The mess-places of the crew were neatly fitted in man-of-war style; and the well-laden shelves of crockery and hardware showed that Jack, as well as Jolly Marine, had spent a portion of his money in securing his comfort in the long voyage before them. A long tier of cabins on either side showed how large a proportion of officers these vessels carried; but it was so far satisfactory, that it assured us of a division of labour, which would make arctic labours comparatively light.

A large captain's cabin, with a gunroom capable of containing all the officers, when met together for their meals, completed the accommodation. The crews consisted of sixty souls each, of whom a fourth were officers. Such were the sailing ships.

The Pioneer and Intrepid were sister vessels, belonging originally to a cattle conveyance company. They were

propelled by screws, and were of sixty-horse power each, about 150 feet long, of 400 tons burden, and rigged as three-masted schooners. Over the whole of their original frames, tough planking, called doubling, was placed, varying from three to six inches in thickness. The decks were likewise doubled; and, as may be supposed, from such numerous fastenings passing through the original timbers of a merchantman, every timber was perforated with so many holes as to be weakened and rendered useless: indeed the vessels may have at last been considered as what is termed "bread-and-butter built," the two layers of planking constituting with the decks the actual strength of the vessels. At the bow the fine form had happily been retained, the timber strengthenings being thrown into them at that point within, and not without; they were therefore, at the fore-end, somewhat like a strong wedge. Many an oracle had shaken his head at this novelty; and when I talked of cutting and breaking ice with an iron stem, the lip curled in derision and pity; and I saw that they thought of me as Joe Stag, the Plymouth boatman, did of the Brazilian frigate when she ran the breakwater down in a fog,—"Happy beggar! he knows nothing and he fears nothing."

A few catastrophe-lovers in England having consigned Franklin to death because he had steam-engines and screws, every precaution was taken to secure the Pioneer and Intrepid in such a way that screw, rudder, and sternpost might be torn off by the much-talked of *bogie*—the ice—and the vessels still be left fit to swim. In the internal arrangements for meeting an arctic climate,

we were on somewhat a similar plan to the ships,—some difficulties being presented by the large mass of cold iron machinery, which, of course, acted as a rapid refrigerator. For the voyage out, the men were confined to a little place in the bows of the vessel, and from thence to the cabins of the officers all was coal: a dead weight of 260 tons being originally carried from England, which we increased to 300 tons at the Whale Islands. This, at an average consumption of seven tons *per diem*, would enable us *to tow the ships* 3000 *miles*, or *to steam alone fully* 5000 *miles*, carrying twelve or eighteen months' provision. The crew consisted of thirty souls, all told, of which five were officers: namely, a lieutenant in command and a second master, as executive officers; an assistant-surgeon, who zealously undertook the superintendence of the commissariat, both public and private; and two engineers, to look after the steam department. These occupied the smallest conceivable space in the after-end of the steamers; and, with separate cabins, had a common mess-place.

Such were the arctic screws: it only remains for me to say, that they were very handsome, smart-sailing vessels, and those embarked in them partook of none of the anxieties and croakings which declared opponents and doubtful allies entertained as to their success in what was styled a great experiment. They had but one wish ungratified, which was, that they had been sent alone and fully provisioned, instead of carrying an inadequate proportion of food, so that, in the event of being separated from the ships by accident, they might have wintered without suffering and hardship.

All the crews had been carefully chosen for health and efficiency; and they, as well as the officers, were actuated by the loftiest feelings of enterprise and humanity; and that feeling was fostered and strengthened by the expressions of the high confidence placed in the squadron by their country. In fact, we were called heroes long before we had earned our laurels. Lastly, the Admiralty put into the hands of the officers the orders they had given the leader of this noble squadron; and there was but one opinion as to those orders, that more liberal, discretionary ones never were penned: and with such power to act as circumstances might render necessary, we felt confident of deserving, if we could not command, success.

June 24, *Baffin's Bay.* — The squadron was flying north, in an open sea, over which bergs of every size and shape floated in wild magnificence. The excitement, as we dashed through the storm, in steering clear of them, was delightful from its novelty. Hard a-starboard! Steady! Port! Port! you may!—and we flew past some huge mass, over which the green seas were fruitlessly trying to dash themselves. Coleridge describes the scene around us too well for me to degrade it with my prose. I will give his version :—

"And now there came both mist and snow,
And it grew wondrous cold,
And ice, mast-high, came floating by
As green as emerald.
And through the drifts, the snowy clifts
Did send a dismal sheen;
Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken,
The ice was all between.

With sloping masts, and dipping prow,
As who pursued with yell and blow,
Still treads the shadow of his foe,
And forward bends his head.
The ship drove fast, loud roared the blast,
And *northward* aye we fled."

Through just such a scene we sped, until we suddenly hauled-in for the land of Greenland, in order to visit the settlement of Uppernavik. Passing into a channel some four miles in width, we found ourselves running past the remarkable and lofty cliffs of "Sanderson his Hope"—a quaint name given to this point by the "righte worthie Master Davis," in honour of his patron, a merchant of Bristol. Well worthy was it of one whose liberality had tended to increase England's maritime fame; and the Hope's lofty crest pierced through the clouds which drove athwart its breast, and looked afar to see "whether the Lord of the Earth came not."

Under its lee the water was a sheet of foam and spray from the fierce gusts which swept down ravine and over headland; and against the base of the rocks, flights of wild fowl marked a spot famous amongst arctic voyagers as abounding in fresh food—a charming variety to salt horse and Hambro' pork.

On rounding an inner islet of the Women's Group, as it is called, a straggling assemblage of Esquimaux huts, with a black and red storehouse or two, as at Disco, denoted the northernmost of the present Danish settlements, as well as the site of an ancient Scandinavian port—a fact assured by the recent discovery of a stone pillar on one of the adjacent islands bearing the following inscription :—

"Elling Sigvatson, Bjame Thordason, and Endride Oddson, erected these memorial stones and cleared this place on Saturday before Gagndag (25th April), in the year 1135."

Exactly four hundred and fifty-two years before the place was rediscovered by our countryman, Davis.

The Intrepid having the honour of carrying-in the two post-captains, we box-hauled about in the offing until she returned with the disagreeable intelligence that all the English whalers were blocked up by ice some thirty miles to the northward. Captain Penny had been unable to advance, and the season was far from a promising one! Squaring our yards, we again bore up for the northward. In a few hours, a strong reflected light to the westward and northward showed we were fast approaching the ice-fields or floes of Baffin's Bay. A whaler, cruising about, shortly showed herself.

June 26, 1850.—My rough notes are as follows:—A.M. Standing in for the land, northward of "Women's Isles," saw several whalers fast to the in-shore ice. Observe one of them standing out. H.M.S. Assistance is ordered to communicate. We haul to the wind. I visit the Resolute Learn that we altered course last night because the floes were seen extending across ahead. The whaler turns out to be the Abram, Captain Gravill. He reports:—"Fourteen whalers stopped by the ice; Captain Penny, with his ships, after incurring great risk, and going through much severe labour, was watching the floes with the hope of slipping past them into the *north water.*"

Captain Gravill had lately ranged along the pack-edge as far south as Disco, and found not a single opening

except the bight up which we had been steering last night. He said, furthermore, "that there would be no passage across the bay this year for the whalers, because the water would not make sufficiently early to enable them to reach the fishing-ground in Pond's Bay by the first week in August, after which date the whales travel southward towards Labrador. The report wound up with the discouraging statement that the whale-men agreed that the floes, this season, were unusually extensive—that the leads or cracks of water were few, and icebergs more numerous than they had been for some years."

It appears that a northerly gale has been blowing, with but slight intermission, for the last month; and that there is, in consequence, a large body of water to the north, the ice from which has been forced into and chokes the narrows of Davis Straits. All we have to pray for is, a continuation of the same breeze; for otherwise southerly winds will jam the whole body of it up into Melville Bay, and make what is called a "closed season."

Captain Gravill told us that Penny was working day and night to get ahead, and had already run no small risk, and undergone extraordinary labour. Poor Penny! I felt that fate had been against him! He deserved better than to be overtaken by us, after the energy displayed in the equipment of his squadron.

In the first watch the brigs Lady Franklin and Sophia were seen by us fast between loose floe-pieces, to seaward of which we continued to flirt. The Intrepid and Pioneer were now to be seen slyly trying their bows

upon every bit of ice we could get near, without getting into a scrape with our Commodore; and, from the ease with which they cut through the rotten stuff around our position, I already foresaw a fresh era in arctic voyaging, and that the fine bows would soon beat the antediluvian "bluffs" out of the field.

Thursday, June 27, 1850, found us still cruising about under canvass; northward and westward a body of dingy ice, fast decaying under a fierce sunlight, icebergs in hundreds in every direction; and, dotted along the Greenland shore, a number of whalers fast in what is called "land water," ready to take the first opening. The barometer falling, we were ordered to make fast to icebergs, every one choosing his own. This operation is a very useful one in arctic regions, and saves much unnecessary wear and tear of men and vessel, when progress in the required direction is no longer possible.

The bergs, from their enormous depth, are usually aground, except at spring tides, and the seamen thus succeeds in anchoring his vessel in 200 fathoms water, without any other trouble than digging a hole in the iceberg, placing an anchor in it called an ice-anchor, which one man can lift, and, with a whale-line, his ship rides out under the lee of this natural breakwater, in severe gales, and often escapes being beset in a lee pack.

Fastening to a berg has its risks and dangers. Sometimes the first stroke of the man setting the ice-anchor, by its concussion, causes the iceberg to break up, and the people so employed run great risk of being injured; at another time, vessels obliged to make fast under the steep side of a berg have had pieces detach themselves from

overhead, and injure materially the vessel and spars; and, again, the projecting masses, called tongues (which form under water the base of the berg), have been known to break off and strike a vessel so severely as to sink her. All these risks are duly detailed by every arctic navigator, and the object always is, in fastening to an iceberg, to look for a side which is low and sloping, without any tongues under water. To such a one the Intrepid and Pioneer made fast, although the boat's crew that first reached it, in making a hole, were wetted by a projecting mass detaching itself with the first blow of the seaman's crowbar. A gale sprang up almost immediately, and during the night the Assistance blew adrift. Next day it abated, and the ice to the northward looked open.

In the evening one of Penny's vessels, the Sophia, joined us, and from her commander we soon heard of their hopes and disappointment. Directly after leaving Disco they fell in with the ice, and had fought their way the whole distance to their present position. The season was not promising, "but forty-eight hours of a N.E. wind would do wonders," said Stewart; and I cordially partook of his opinion, that "keeping the vessel's nose to the crack" was the only way to get ahead in the arctic seas. The crews of the brigs were in rattling health and spirits. Having delivered him some letters and a number of parcels which, by great good luck, had not been landed at Uppernavik, Captain Stewart returned to his chief, some eight miles northward of us, and we remained to watch progress.

Saturday, June 29, 1850.— . . . .

Monday, July 1, 1850.—At last the hoped-for signal,

"take ships in tow," was made; and, with a leaping heart, we entered the lead, having the Resolute fast by the nose with a six-inch hawser. What looked impassable at ten miles' distance was an open lead when close to. Difficulties vanish when they are faced; and the very calm which rendered the whalers unable to take advantage of a loose pack, was just the thing for steamers. Away we went! past berg, past floe, winding in and out quietly, yet steadily!—and the whalers were soon astern. Penny, the indefatigable, was seen struggling along the shore, with his boats ahead, towing, and every stitch of sail set to catch the lightest catspaw: we soon passed him too. The water ahead increased as we advanced, and we found, as is well known to be the case, that the pack-edge is always the tightest part of it.

Several whale-boats from the vessels astern were busy taking wild ducks' eggs from the islands which abound along the coast. When passing one of these islands that appeared remarkably steep, I was disagreeably surprised to feel the Pioneer strike against a sunken rock with some violence; she slipped off it, and then the Resolute gave herself a blow which made everything quiver again. Captain Penny had a signal up, warning us of the danger; but we were too busy to see it until afterwards. After this accident we went very cautiously until the evening hour, when, having neared Cape Shackleton, and some thin ice showing itself, through which, at reduced speed, we could not tow the broad-bowed Resolute, she was cast off, and made fast to some land ice, and I proceeded on alone in the Pioneer to see what the prospect was further on.

Cutting through some rotten ice of about six inches in thickness, we reached water beyond it, and saw a belt of water, of no great width, extending along shore as far as the next headland, called Horse's Head. Picking up a boat belonging to the Chieftain whaler, which had been shooting and egging, I returned towards the Resolute with my intelligence, giving Cape Shackleton a close shave to avoid the ice which was setting against it from the westward, the whale-men whom I had on board expressing no small astonishment and delight at the way in which we screwed through the broken ice of nine-inch thickness. On reaching the squadron I found it made fast for the night, and parties of officers preparing to start in different directions to shoot, and see what was to be seen, for, of course, our night was as light as the day of any other region.

To the Chieftain's doctor I, with others of the Pioneer, consigned what we flattered ourselves were our last letters, thinking that, now the steamers had got ahead, it was not likely the whalers would again be given an opportunity of communicating with or overtaking us.

There is always something painful in last letters, yet I hardly knew which feeling most predominated in my breast—sorrow and regret for those friends I had left behind me, or hope and joyful anticipation of meeting those before us in the Erebus and Terror.

At any rate I gave vent to them by climbing the rocky summit of Cape Shackleton, and, throwing off my jacket, let the cold breeze allay the excitement of my mind.

Nothing strikes the traveller in the north more strongly

than the perceptible repose of nature, although the sun is still illumining the heavens, during those hours termed night. We, of course, who were unaccustomed to the constant light, were restless and unable to sleep; but the inhabitants of these regions, as well as the animals, retire to rest with as much regularity as is done in more southern climes; and the subdued tints of the heavens, as well as the heavy banking of clouds in the neighbourhood of the sun, give to the arctic summer night a quietude as marked as it is pleasant. Across Baffin's Bay there was ice! ice! ice! on every side, small faint streaks of water here and there in the distance, with one cheering strip of it winding snake-like along the coast as far as eye could reach. "To-morrow," I exclaimed, "we will be there." "Yes," replied a friend; "but if the breeze freshens, Penny will reach it to-night!" And there, sure enough, were Penny's brigs sailing past our squadron; which showed no sign of vitality beyond that of the officer of the watch visiting the ice-anchors to see that all was right. "That fellow, Penny, is no sluggard," we muttered, "and will yet give the screws a hard tussle to beat him."

A couple of hours' rest, and, having taken the ships in tow, we again proceeded; and, at about seven o'clock on the morning of the 2d of July, passed the Sophia, and shortly afterwards the Lady Franklin,—alas! poor Penny! he had a light contrary wind to work against.

I do not think my memory can recall in the course of my wanderings anything more novel or striking than the scenes through which we steamed this forenoon. The land of Greenland, so bold, so steep, and in places

so grim, with the long fields of white glittering ice floating about on the cold blue sea, and our little vessels—for we looked pigmies beside the huge objects around us, whether cliff, berg, or glacier—stealing on so silently and quickly, the leadsman's song or the flap of wild fowl the only sounds to break the general stillness. One of the cliffs we skirted along was actually teeming with birds called "loons:" they might have been shot in tens of hundreds had we required them or time not pressed. They are considered remarkably good eating, and about the size and weight of an ordinary duck. To naturalists they are known by the name of guillemot, and were christened "loons" by the early Dutch navigators, in consequence of their stupidity. Numerous seals lay on the ice in the offing, and their great size astonished us.

As we advanced, a peculiarly conical island, in a broad and ice-encumbered bay, showed itself: it was "the Sugar Loaf Island" of the whalers, and told us that, on rounding the farther headland, we should see the far-famed Devil's Thumb, the boundary of Melville Bay.

A block of ice brought us up after a tow of some twenty-five or thirty miles, and each vessel picking up a convenient iceberg, we made fast to await an opening.

I landed to obtain a view from a small islet close to the Pioneer, and was rewarded by observing that the Duck Islands, a group some fifteen miles to seaward of us, had evidently a large space of open water around them, and broad *lanes* extended from these in divers directions toward us, although, without retracing our steps, there was at present no direct road for us into that open water.

Captain Penny, however, being astern, had struck to seaward, and was again fast passing our position.

On the islands there were recent traces of both reindeer and bears; and I amused myself picking some pretty arctic flowers, such as anemones, poppies, and saxifrage, which grew in sheltered nooks amongst the rocks.

Before leaving the vessel, a boat full of men had been despatched back to the headland where so many "loons" had been seen, to shoot for the ship's company: the other ships did likewise. They returned at about four o'clock next morning, and I was annoyed at being informed without any sport, although all the powder and shot had been expended.

I sent for the captain of the forecastle, who had been away in charge of the sportsmen, and, with astonishment, asked how he had contrived to fire away one pound of powder and four of small shot, without bringing home some "loons"? Hanging his head, and looking uncommonly bashful, he answered, "If you please, sir, we fired it all into a bear!" "Into a bear?" I exclaimed; "what! shoot a bear with No. 4 shot!" "Yes, sir," replied Abbot; "and if it hadn't have been for two or three who were afeard of him, we would have brought him aboard, too." Sending my bear-hunting friend about his business for neglecting my orders to obtain fresh food for the crew, I afterwards found out that on passing a small island between the Pioneer and the Loon Head, as the cliff was called, my boat's crew had observed a bear watching some seals, and it was voted immediately that to be the first to bring a bear home would immortalise the Pioneer.

A determined onslaught was therefore made on Bruin: No. 4 shot being poured into him most ruthlessly, he growled and snapped his teeth, trotted round the island, and was still followed and fired at, until, finding the fun all on one side, the brute plunged into the water, and swam for some broken-up ice. My heroes followed, and, for lack of ball, fired at him a waistcoat-button and the blade of a knife, which, by great ingenuity, they had contrived to cram down one of their muskets. This very naturally, as they described it, "made the beast jump again!" He reached the ice, however, bleeding all over, but not severely injured; and whilst the bear was endeavouring to get on the floe, a spirited contest ensued between him and old Abbot, the latter trying to become possessor of a skin which the former gallantly defended.

Ammunition expended, and nothing but boat-hooks and stretchers left as defensive weapons, there seemed some chance of the tables being reversed, and the boat's crew very properly obliged the captain of the forecastle to beat a retreat; the bear, equally well pleased to be rid of such visitors, made off. "Old Abbot," as he was styled, always, however, asserted, that if he had had his way the bear would have been brought aboard the Pioneer and tamed to do a good deal of the dragging work of the sledges; and whenever he heard in the winter any of the young hands growling at the labour of sledging away on snow or ice, he created a roar of laughter, by muttering, "Ah! if you had taken my advice, we'd have had that 'ere bear to do this work for us!"

July 3, 1850. — Penny, by taking another route, gave us the "go by," and in the afternoon we started,

taking an in-shore lane of water. The wind, however, had freshened up from the westward, and as we advanced the ice was rapidly closing, the points of the floe-pieces forming "bars," with holes of water between them. With the Pioneer's sharp bow, we broke through the first of these barriers, and carried the Resolute into "a hole of water," as it is called. The next bar being broader, I attempted to force it by charging with the steamer, and after breaking up a portion of it, backed astern to allow the broken pieces to be removed. This was the first time this operation was performed, and was one of many different modes of applying steam-power against ice which we subsequently learnt to employ.

We soon found ourselves surrounded with broken masses, which, owing to the want of men to remove it away into the open water astern, rendered advance or retreat without injury to the propeller almost impossible. Here the paucity of men on board the steam-vessels was severely felt, for until the Resolute was properly secured I could expect no assistance from her; and the Pioneer, therefore, had to do her best with half the number of men, although she was fifty feet longer than the ship. Unable to move, the closing floes fast beset the steamer, and then the large parties of men that joined from the squadron to assist were useless, beyond giving them practice, which all seemed willing to undertake, in the use of ice-tools, such as chisels, poles with iron points, claws, and scoops.

In a short time the vessel was fairly beset, and we "piped down" to wait for the ice to ease off.

A few birds playing about induced myself and some

others to go out shooting, a foggy night promising to be favourable to our larders. The ice, however, was full of holes, and very decayed, in addition to which it was in rapid motion in many places, from the action of wind and tide. The risk of such sporting was well evinced in my gallant friend May's case. He was on one side of a lane of water, and I on the other; a bird called a "burgomaster" flew over his head to seaward, and he started in the direction it had gone. I and another shouted to warn him of the ice being in rapid motion, and very thin; he halted for a moment, and then ran on, leaping from piece to piece. The fog at this moment lifted a little, and most providentially so, for suddenly I saw May make a leap and disappear—the ice had given way! He soon rose, but without his gun, and I then saw him scramble upon a piece of ice, and on watching it, observed with a shudder that both he and it were drifting to the northward, and away from us. Leaving my remaining companion to keep sight of him, and thus to point out the way on my return, I retraced my steps to the Pioneer, and with a couple of men, a long hand-line, and long boarding-poles, started off in the direction May was in.

I could tell my route pretty well by my companion's voice, which, in rich Milesian, was giving utterance to encouraging exclamations of the most original nature:—"Keep up your courage, my boy!—Why don't you come back?—Faith, I suppose it's water that won't let you! There will be some one there directly!—Hoy! hoy! ahoy! don't be down-hearted anyway!" I laughed as as I ran. My party placed themselves about ten yards apart, the last man carrying the line, ready to heave, in

case of the leader breaking through. So weak was the ice, that we had to keep at a sharp trot to prevent the weight of our own bodies resting long on any one spot; and when we sighted May on his little piece of firm ice, the very natural exclamation of one of my men was, "I wonder how he ever reached it, sir?" May assisted us to approach him by pointing out his own route: and by extending our line, and holding on to it, we at last got near enough to take him off the piece of detached ice on which he had providentially scrambled. I never think of the occurrence without a sickening sensation the horror of being drifted away upon a block of ice which was itself melting under a summer sun. Many a seal-hunter thus perishes in this region. Whilst walking back with my half-frozen friend, the ice showed itself to be easing off rapidly with the turn of tide. At 1 A.M. the ships were all free, and a lane of water extending itself ahead.

July 4.—At 1 P.M. we started again, towing the ships, the whaling fleet from the southward under every stitch of canvass threatening to reach the Duck Islands before ourselves, and Captain Penny's squadron out of sight to the north-west. By dint of hard steaming we contrived to reach the islands before the whalers, and at midnight got orders to cast off and cruise about under sail, all the vessels rejoining us that we had passed some days ago off the Women's Isles.

The much-talked of, by whalemen, "Devil's Thumb," was now open. It appears to be a huge mass of granite or basalt, which rears itself on a cliff of some 600 or 800 feet elevation, and is known as the southern boundary of

Melville Bay, round whose dreary circuit, year after year, our whale fishermen work their way to reach the large body of water about the entrance of Lancaster Sound and Pond's Bay. Facing to the south-west, from whence the worst gales of wind at this season of the year arise, it is not to be wondered at that Melville Bay has been the grave of many a goodly craft; and in one disastrous year the whaling fleet was diminished by no less than twenty-eight sail (without the loss of life, however), a blow from which it has never yet recovered. No good reason was adduced for taking this route, beyond the argument, founded upon experience, that the earliest passages were always to be made by Melville Bay. This I perfectly understood; for early in the season, when northerly winds do prevail, the coast of Melville Bay is a weather-shore, and the ice, acted upon by wind and current, would detach itself and form between the land-ice and the pack-ice a safe highroad to the westward. It was far otherwise in 1850. The prospect of an early passage—viz., from the first to the third week of June —had long vanished. Southerly winds, after so long a prevalence of northerly ones (*vide* Captain Gravill's information), were to be expected. The whole weight of the Atlantic would be forced up Davis Straits, and Melville Bay become "a dead lee-shore." I should therefore not have taken the ice, or attempted to work my way round Melville Bay, and would instead have gone to the westward and struck off sooner or later into the west water, in about the latitude of Uppernavik, 73° 30′ N.

However, this is what amongst the experienced is styled theory; and as anything was better than standing

still, I was heartily glad to see the Chieftain, a bonnie Scotch whaler, show us the road by entering a lead of water, and away we all went, working to windward. The sailing qualities of the naval arctic ships threatened to be sadly eclipsed by queer-looking craft, like the True-love and others. But steam came to the rescue, and after twelve hours' hard struggle we towed our consorts again ahead of our enterprising and energetic countrymen.

Saturday, July 6.—By 6 A.M. we were alongside of Penny's squadron, which was placed at the head of the lane of water up which we had also advanced; and so keen was he not to lose the post of honour, that, as we closed, I smiled to see the Aberdonians move their vessels up into the very "nip." In the course of the day the whalers again caught us up, and a long line of masts and hulls dotted the floe-edge astern.

The sea-ice was now white and hard, affording good exercise for pedestrians; and to novices, of whom there were many amongst us, the idea of walking about on the frozen surface of the sea was not a little charming. In all directions groups of three and four persons were seen trudging about, and the constant puffs of smoke which rose in the clear atmosphere showed that shooting for the table was kept carefully in view.

A present of 170 duck-eggs from Captain Stewart of the Joseph Green whaler, showed in what profusion these birds breed; and I was told by Captain Penny that one of the islets passed by him on the 2d was literally alive with ducks, and that several boat-loads of eggs might have been taken off it—interesting proofs of the extraordinary abundance of animal life in these northern

regions. Our Saturday evening was passed listening to stirring tales of Melville Bay and the whale fishery, and several prophecies as to the chances of a very bad season —the number of icebergs and extent of the ice-fields inducing many to believe that more than usual risk would be run in the bay this year. Sunday forenoon passed quietly and according to law, though a falling barometer made us watch anxiously a heavy bank of black clouds which rested in the southern heavens.

The dinner-bell, however, rang; and having a very intelligent gentleman who commands a whaler as a guest, we were much interested in listening to his description of the strange life led by men like himself engaged in the adventurous pursuit of the whale. Captain Stewart assured us that he had not seen corn grow, or eaten fresh gooseberries, for thirty years! although he had been at home every winter. Though now advanced in years, with a large family—one of whom was the commander of her Majesty's brig the Sophia, then in company—still he spoke with enthusiasm of the excitement and risks of his own profession. It had its charms for the old sailor, whose skill and enterprise had been excited for so many years in braving the dangers of ice-encumbered seas, whether around Spitzbergen or in Baffin's Bay. He evidently felt a pride and satisfaction in his past career, and it had still sweet reminiscences for him. I felt a pride in seeing such a man a brother-seaman—one who loved the north because it had hardships—one who delighted to battle with a noble foe. "We are the only people," he said, "who follow the whale, and kill him in spite of the ice and cold." There was the true sportsman in such

feelings. He and the whale were at war—not even the ice could save his prey.*

A report from deck, that the ice was coming in before a southerly gale, finished our dinner very abruptly, and the alteration that had taken place in a couple of hours was striking. A blue sky had changed to one of a dusky colour—a moaning gale sent before it a low brown vapour, under which the ice gleamed fiercely—the floes were rapidly pressing together. Two whalers were already nipped severely, and their people were getting the boats and clothing out ready for an accident.

"The sooner we are all in dock the better," said Captain S., as he hurried away to get his own vessel into safety; and, almost as quickly as I can tell it, a scene of exciting interest commenced—that of cutting docks in the fixed ice, called land-floe, so as to avoid the pressure which would occur at its edge by the body of ice to seaward being forced against it by the fast rising gale. Smart things are done in the navy, but I do not think anything could excel the alacrity with which the floe was suddenly peopled by about 500 men, triangles rigged, and the long saws (called ice-saws) used for cutting the ice, manned. A hundred songs from hoarse throats resounded through the gale; the sharp chipping of the saws told that the work was flying; and the laugh or broad witticisms of the crews mingled with

* This worthy old Scotch fisherman perished next year off Spitzbergen. His ship was caught between two fields of ice, and as she was sinking he rushed down to save a sick sailor, and sank with the ship that had so long been his home.

the words of command and encouragement to exertion given by the officers.

The pencil of a Wilkie could hardly convey the characteristics of such a scene, and it is far beyond my humble pen to tell of the stirring animation exhibited by twenty ships' companies, who knew that on their own exertions depended the safety of their vessels and the success of their voyage. The ice was of an average thickness of three feet, and to cut this saws of ten feet long were used, the length of stroke being about as far as the men directing the saw could reach up and down. A little powder was used to break up the pieces that were cut, so as to get them easily out of the mouth of the dock, an operation which the officers of our vessels performed whilst the men cut away with the saws. In a very short time all the vessels were in safety, the pressure of the pack expending itself on a chain of bergs some ten miles north of our present position. The unequal contest between floe and iceberg exhibited itself there in a fearful manner; for the former pressing onward against the huge grounded masses was torn into shreds, and thrown back piecemeal, layer on layer of many feet in elevation, as if mere shreds of some flimsy material, instead of solid, hard ice, every cubic yard of which weighed nearly a ton.

The smell of our numerous fires brought a bear in sight. Nimrods without number issued out to slay him, the weapons being as varied as the individuals were numerous. The chase would, however, have been a fruitless one, had not the bear in his retreat fallen in with and killed a seal; his voracity overcame his fears,

and being driven into the water, he was shot from the boat of one of the whalers which had perseveringly followed him.

The brute was of no great size—not more than five feet in length. The coat, instead of being white, was turned to a dingy yellow, much resembling in colour decayed ice; a resemblance which enabled the animal, no doubt, to approach the seals with greater facility.

By midnight all fears for the safety of the vessels had ceased; indeed, as far as our searching ships had been concerned, there never had been much cause for fear, the operation of docking having been carried out by us more for the sake of practice than from necessity. We were tightly beset until the following evening, when the ice as suddenly moved off as it had come together; and then a scene of joyful excitement took place, such as is only to be seen in the arctic regions—every ship striving to be foremost in her escape from imprisonment, and to lead ahead. Want of wind obliged the whalers and Penny's brigs to be tracked along the floe-edge by the crews—a laborious operation, which is done on our English canals by horses; here, however, the powerful crews of fishermen, mustering from thirty-five to fifty hands, fastened on by their track-belts to a whale-line, and with loud songs, made their vessels slip through the water at an astonishing pace.

An odd proof of the unhandiness of such vessels as the Resolute and Assistance was given to-day: the former endeavoured to tow herself ahead by the aid of all her boats, a distance of about three or four hundred yards, and was quite unable to do so, although the wind

against her hardly amounted to a catspaw; the consequence was, that until the steam-vessels got hold, she was fast dropping astern of the whalers, and, as was usually the case, every one's temper was going wrong. The run was not a very long one, and in the heart of a fleet of icebergs we again brought up—one whaler, the Truelove, having turned back in despair of a passage north-about to Pond's Bay.

From our position a good view of Melville Bay was to be had, and a more melancholy one eye never rested upon. Surrounded as we were with bergs, we had to climb a neighbouring mass to obtain a clear horizon; the prospect to seaward was not cheering; and from the Devil's Thumb northward, one huge glacier spread itself. The first sensation we felt was that of pity for the poor land—pressed down and smothered under so deadly a weight: here and there, a strip of cliff protruded, black and bare, from the edge of the *mer-de-glace*, whose surface, rough and unpleasing, was of a sombre yellowish tint, with occasional masses of basalt protruding through it, like the uplifted hands of drowning men: it seemed Earth's prayer for light and life; but the ice, shroud-like, enveloped it, and would not give up the dead.

July 9.—Every day taught us something: we had learnt that the ice went off as rapidly, if not more so, than it came in; and when an opening occurred to-day, the Pioneer, with the Resolute again in tow, was ahead of the whalers, and close on Penny's heels.

The ice to-day lay much across, forming very tortuous channels; and the performance of the screws, in twisting themselves and their tail-pieces (the ships) round

floe-pieces and bergs, was as interesting as it was satisfactory. In some places we had to adopt a plan, styled by us "making a cannon!" from its resemblance to the same feat in billiards. This generally occurred at sharp and intricate turns, where the breadth of water was considerably less than the length of the vessels; we then, in order to get the vessel's stem in the proper direction, used to steer her in such a way that the bow on the opposite side to which we wanted her to turn struck the ice with some force; the consequence was, the steamer would turn short off, and save the risk of getting athwart "the lead," and aid in checking the ship round at the same time.

Another novel application of steam took place to-day. We came to a bar of ice, formed of loose floe-pieces of all sizes, but too small to heave through by means of ice-anchors and lines; Penny stood close up to it, but he could neither sail through it nor warp; he had therefore to make a long detour round its edge; *steam*, however, was able to do it; and with our knife-like bows, aided by the propeller, we soon wedged a road through for ourselves and the Resolute.

Detentions in the ice were amongst the most trying moments of our life in the North; and from the composition of our squadron—namely, two fast vessels and two slow ones—the constant waiting for one another put me much in mind of the old doggrel:—

"The Earl of Chatham, with sword drawn,
Was waiting for Sir Richard Strachan;
Sir Richard, longing to be at 'em,
Was waiting for the Earl of Chatham."

The risk of detention in such a region can be understood by all; but few, perhaps, will appreciate the feeling of mingled passion and regret with which the leading vessel in such a mission as we had in hand found herself obliged to wait to close her consort, when all was water ahead, and the chances of it remaining so were but slight. A few hours, we all knew, had often made the difference of a passage across Melville Bay without detention, or of a long, laborious voyage—here we were constantly waiting for our heavy-heeled consorts.

. . . . . .

On the 10th, a short tow, and in company with a portion of the whalers, for several had retreated, we again had to dock, to escape nipping from the ice; and on the morrow, a similar scene of hurry and excitement took place when liberation came.

Thursday, 11. — Seven of the most enterprising whalers still hung on our heels, and to-day found us all at a bar beyond which there was a sea of water. Patience! was the *mot d'ordre;* and it vented itself in a number of dinners and the winding-up of letters; for we all felt that the hour of separation from the whalers must soon arrive. They all were delighted with the performance of the steam-vessels in the ice, and quizzed our crews for sitting at their ease, whilst they had to drag like horses. Captain Penny, likewise, candidly acknowledged that he never thought they could have answered so well; and regretted that he had not had a steam-vessel. Our seamen fully appreciated the good service the screw had done them: they had now been eleven days in the ice, during every day of which period they had witnessed

it working effectually under every circumstance; they had seen the crews of the whalers labouring at the track-line, at the oar, and in making and shortening sail, both by day and by night; whilst our crews had nothing to do beyond taking the ships in tow and casting them off again: already I observed a really sincere anxiety upon the part of every one for the safety of the "screw." I heard from henceforth inquiries amongst my men whenever a shock took place, "whether *she* was all right?" or to my orders a ready response—"All right, sir! she is all free of the ice!"

At night the bar opened, and, giving the Lady Franklin a jerk into the water beyond, the Intrepid and Pioneer rattled away with our ships in tow, as hard as steam could take us. O for one run of ninety miles! There was open water ahead; but, alas! we could only get three miles an hour out of our vessels; alone, we could have gone five, making in a day's work the difference between seventy-two and one hundred and twenty miles.

By two o'clock in the morning we had outrun both Penny and the whalers; and, could we only have gone faster, assuredly the passage of Melville Bay would have been that day effected. The land-floe was still attached to Greenland, reaching twenty-five or thirty miles off-shore, and the pack had drifted off some ten or fifteen miles; between the two we were steaming at five o'clock in the morning of the 12th of July, and all was promising—a headland called Cape Walker and Melville Monument opening fast to view. The quartermaster grinned as he made his report that he was sure we were in what was a fair lead into the North Water!

Hope is not prophecy, and so they will find who labour in the North ; for how changed was the prospect when I went on deck, after a short sleep ! A south wind had sprung up. We were under sail. The pack was coming in fast, and the signal, "Prepare to take the ice," flying from the Commodore's mast-head. We did take it, as the pack came against the land-floe, with Cape Walker about abreast of us ; and, in a few hours, the "nip" took place. The Intrepid and Pioneer having gone into a natural dock together, were secure enough until the projecting points of the land-floe gave way, when the weight of the pressure came on the vessels, and then we felt, for the first time, a Melville Bay squeeze. The vessels, lifted by the floes, shot alternately ahead of one another, and rode down the floe for some fifty yards, until firmly imbedded in ice, which, in many layers, formed a perfect cradle under their bottoms. We, of course, were passive spectators, beyond taking the precaution to have a few men following the vessels over the ice with two or three of the boats, in case of a fatal squeeze. The "sweet little cherub" watched over the steamers, however, and in a short time the pressure transferred itself elsewhere. Next day showed all of her Majesty's squadron beset in Melville Bay. The gale had abated, but an immense body of ice had come in from the S.W. To the N.W. a dark haze showed a water sky, but from it we must have been at least forty miles. Between us and the shore, a land-floe,* of some thirty miles in width, followed the sinuosities of the coast-line.

* A land-floe is the belt of sea-ice which adheres to the land until the summer is well advanced.

Bergs here and there strewed its surface; but the major part of them formed what is called a "reef," in the neighbourhood of Devil's Thumb, denoting either a bank or shoal water in that direction.

A powerful sunlight obliged spectacles of every shade, size, and description to be brought into use; and, as we walked about from ship to ship, a great deal of joking and facetiousness arose out of the droll appearance of some individuals. Utility, and not beauty, was, however, generally voted the great essential in our bachelor community, and good looks, by general consent, put away for a future day. Great reflection, as well as refraction, existed for the time we remained beset in this position; and the refraction on one occasion enabled us to detect Captain Penny's brigs as well as the whalers, although they must have been nearly thirty miles distant.

The ice slackening a little formed what are called "holes of water," and in these we soon observed a shoal of narwhales, or unicorn fish, blowing and enjoying themselves. By extraordinary luck one of the officers of the Intrepid, in firing at them, happened to hit one in a vital part, and the brute was captured, his horn forming a handsome trophy for the sportsman. The result of this was, that the unfortunate narwhales got no peace; directly they showed themselves a shower of balls was poured into them.

This fish is found throughout the fishing-ground of Baffin's Bay, but is not particularly sought for by our people. The Esquimaux kill it with ease, and its flesh and skin are eaten as luxuries; the latter especially, as an antiscorbutic, even by the whalers, and some of our

crews partook of the extremely greasy-looking substance, one man vowing it was very like chestnuts! (?) I did not attempt to judge for myself, but I have no doubt it would form good food to a really hungry person. The narwhales vary in size, ranging sometimes, I am told, to fourteen feet; the horns, of which I saw a great many at Whale-Fish Isles, were from three feet to seven feet in length. The use of this horn is a matter of controversy amongst the fishermen: it is almost too blunt for offence, and its point, for about four inches, is always found well polished, whilst the remainder of it is usually covered with slime and greenish seaweed. Some maintain that it roots up food from the bottom of the sea with this horn; others, that it probes the clefts and fissures of the floating ice with it, to drive out the small fish, which are said to be its prey, and which instinctively take shelter there from their pursuers.

The body of the narwhale is covered with a layer of blubber of about two inches in thickness. This was removed, and carefully boiled down to make oil; and the *krang*, or carcass, was left as a decoy to molliemauks and ivory-gulls, the latter birds having for the first time been seen by me to-day. They are decidedly the most graceful of sea-birds; and from the exquisite purity of their plumage when settled on a piece of ice or snow, it required a practised eye to detect them. Not so the voracious and impertinent mollies—the Procellaria of naturalists. Their very ugliness appeared to give them security, and they are in the North what the vulture and carrion crow are in more pleasant climes—nature's scavengers.

The 14th and 15th of July found us still firmly beset, and sorely was our patience taxed. In-shore of us a firm unbroken sheet of ice extended to the land, some fifteen miles distant. Across it, in various directions, like hedgerows in an English landscape, ran long lines of piled-up hummocks, formed during the winter by some great pressure; and on the surface, pools of water and sludge* broke the general monotony of the aspect.

The striking mass of rock known as Melville's Monument was clear of snow, because it was too steep for ice to adhere; but everywhere else huge domes of white glacier showed where Greenland lay, except where Cape Walker thrust its black cliff through the glacier to scowl upon us.

Tantalus never longed for water more than we did. Those who have been so beset can alone tell of the watchfulness and headaching for water. Now to the mast-head with straining eyes,—then arguing and inferring, from the direction of wind and tide, that water must come. Others strolling over to a hole, and with fragments of wood, or a measure, endeavouring to detect that movement in the floes by which liberation was to be brought about. Some sage in uniform, perhaps, tries to prove, by the experience of former voyages, that the lucky day is passed, or close at hand; whilst wiser ones console themselves with exclaiming, "that, at any rate, we are, as yet, before Sir James Ross's last expedition, both in time and position."

The 16th of July showed more favourable symptoms, and Captain Penny was seen working for a lane of water

* The term applied to half-thawed ice or snow.

a long way in-shore of us. In the night a general disruption of the land-ice was taking place in the most marvellous manner, and, by the next morning, there was nearly as much water as there had before been ice. The two steamers, firmly imbedded in a mass of ice, many miles in circumference, were drifting rapidly to the southward, whilst the two ships afloat in a large space of water, and fastened to the floe, awaited our liberation.

The prospect of a separation from the ships, when unavoidable, in nowise depressed the spirits of my colleague of the Intrepid nor myself. Like the man who lost a troublesome wife, we felt if it must be so, it was for the best, and we were resigned. But it was not to be; the Intrepid with her screw, and the Pioneer with gunpowder, which, for the first time, was now applied, shook the fragments apart in which we were beset, and again we laid hold of our mentors. A thick fog immediately enveloped us, and in it we got completely puzzled, took a wrong lead, and, tumbling into a perfect *cul de sac*, made fast, to await a break in the weather. The 18th of July, from the same cause, a dense fog, was a lost day, and next day Penny again caught us up. He reported the whalers to have given up all idea of a northern fishery this season. Alas for the many friends who will be disappointed in not receiving letters! and alas for the desponding in England! who will croak and sigh at the whalers failing to get across Melville Bay, believing, therefore, that *we* shall fail likewise.

Penny had passed a long way inside of the spot the steamers had been beset and nipped in; and he witnessed a sight which, although constantly taking place,

is seldom seen—the entire dissolution of an enormous iceberg.

This iceberg had been observed by our squadron, and remarked for its huge size and massiveness, giving good promise of resisting a century of sun and thaw. It looked as large as Westminster Abbey. All on board the Lady Franklin described as a most wonderful spectacle this iceberg, without any warning, falling as it were to pieces. The sea around it became a seething caldron, from the violent plunging of the masses as they broke and rebroke in a thousand pieces. The floes, torn up for a distance of ten miles around it, by the violent action of the rollers, threatened, from the agitation of the ice, to destroy any vessel that had been amongst it; and they congratulated themselves on being sufficiently removed from the scene of danger to see without incurring any immediate risk.

The fog again lifted for a short time. Penny went up into my "crow's nest," as well as into the Resolute's, and soon gave us the disagreeable intelligence that the land-floe had broken up, and we were in the pack, instead of having, as we had fancied, "land-ice" to hold on by; and, as he remarked, "We can do nothing but push for it;—it's all broken ice, and push we must, in-shore, or else away we go with the loose floes back again to the south."

With this feeling the six vessels started in the night, in an indifferent and cross lead, we towing the Resolute and Lady Franklin—the Intrepid, with Assistance and Sophia, astern. Breaking through two light barriers of ice, the prospect improved; and as they said from the

"crow's nest" that eight miles of water was beyond a neck of ice ahead, I cast off the vessel in tow to charge the ice. At first she did well, but the floe was nearly six feet thick, hard and sound, and a pressure on it besides. The Pioneer was caught, and the squadron anchored astern to the floe to await an opening. A short liberation from ice-grip occasionally took place, and we were left in "a hole of water," which we naturally prayed and hoped would extend into "a lane." It was not, however, to be so yet; and on the morning of the 20th we were again beset, and a south gale threatened to increase the pressure. Escape was, however, impossible, and "Fear not, but trust in Providence" is a necessary motto for arctic seamen. My faith in this axiom was soon put to the proof. After a short sleep I was called on deck, as the vessel was suffering from great pressure. My own senses soon made it evident; every timber and plank was cracking and groaning, the vessel was thrown considerably over on her side, and lifted bodily, the bulkheads cracking, and trenails and bolts breaking with small reports. On reaching the deck I saw indeed that the poor Pioneer was in sad peril; the deck was arching with the pressure on her sides, the scupper-pieces were turning up out of the mortices, and a quiver of agony wrung my craft's frame from stem to taffrail, whilst the floe, as if impatient to overwhelm its victim, had piled up as high as the bulwark in many places.

The men—who, whaler-fashion, had, without orders I afterwards learnt, brought their clothes on deck, ready to save their little property—stood in knots, waiting for directions from the officers, who, with anxious eye, watched

the floe-edge as it ground past the side, to see whether the strain was easing. Suddenly it did so, and we were safe! But a deep dent in the Pioneer's side, extending for some forty feet, and the fact, as we afterwards learnt, of twenty-one timbers being broken upon one side, proved that her trial had been a severe one.

Again had the ice come in upon us from the S.W., and nothing but a steady, watchful progress through the pack was left to our squadron, as well as Penny's. But I shall not weary the reader with the dry detail of our everyday labours, their success or futility. Keenly and anxiously did we take advantage of every move in the ice, between the 20th and 31st July, yet not seven miles in the right direction was made good. The 1st of August found us doubting considerably the prospect of reaching Lancaster Sound by a northern passage; and Captain Penny decided, if the water approached him from the south, to strike to the westward in a lower latitude.

The ships, generally the Resolute, kept the lead in our heaving and warping operations through the pack; and, leaving a small portion of the crews to keep the other vessels close up under her stern, the majority of the officers and men laboured at the headmost ship to move her through the ice. Heaving ahead with stout hawsers, blasting with gunpowder, cutting with ice-saws, and clipping with ice-chisels, was perseveringly carried on; but the progress fell far short of the labour expended, and the bluff-bow slipped away from the nip instead of wedging it open. Warping the Resolute through a barrier of ice by lines out of her hawse-holes, put me in mind of trying to do the same with a cask by a line through the

bung-hole: she slid and swerved every way but the right one, ahead. I often saw her bring dead up, as if a wall had stopped her. After a search some one would exclaim, "Here is the piece that jams her!" and a knock with a two-pound chisel would bring up a piece of ice two or three inches thick! In short, all, or nearly all, of us soon learnt to see that the sharp bow was the only one to get ahead in these regions; and the daily increasing advantage which Penny had over us, was a proof which the most obstinate could not dispute.

I often thought how proud our countrymen would be of their seamen could they have looked on the scene of busy energy and activity displayed in the solitude of Melville Bay:—the hearty song, the merry laugh, and zealous labours of the crew; day after day the same difficulties to contend with, yet day after day met with fresh resolution and new resources; a wide horizon of ice, no sea in sight, yet every foot gained to the northward talked of with satisfaction and delight; men and officers vieing with one another in laborious duties, the latter especially finding amongst a body of seamen actuated by such noble and enthusiastic feelings no necessity to fear an infringement of their dignity. Jack, in this region of compulsory sobriety, was a finer fellow than any one of us had ever fancied. The etiquette of the quarterdeck was thrown on one side for the good of the common cause; and everywhere, whether at the capstan, at the track-line, hauling, heaving, or cutting, the officer worked as hard as the seamen,—each was proud of the other, and discipline suffered nought, indeed improved, for Jack had both precept and example.

If we had our labours, it is not to be wondered at that we had also our leisure and amusements, usually at night —a polar night robed in light. Then, indeed, boys fresh from school never tossed care more to the winds than did the majority of us. Games, which men in any other class of society would vote childish, were entered into with a zest which neither grey hairs nor stout bodies in any degree had damped. Shouts of laughter! roars of "Not fair, not fair! run again!" "Well done, well done!" from individuals leaping and clapping their hands with excitement, arose from many a merry ring, in which "rounders," with a cruelly hard ball, was being played. In other directions the fiddle and clarionet were hard at work, keeping pace with heels which seemed likely never to cease dancing, evincing more activity than grace. Here a sober few were heaving quoits, there a knot of Solomons talked of the past, and argued as to the future; whilst in the distance the sentimental ones strolled about, thinking no doubt of her goodness and beauty, in honour of which, like true knights, they had come thus far to win bright honour from the "Giant of the North."

Sometimes a bear would come in sight, and then its chance of escape would be small, for twenty keen hands were out after the skin: it had been promised as a *gage d'amour* by one to his betrothed; to a sister by another; a third intended to open the purse-strings of a hard-hearted parent by such a proof of regard; and not a few were to go to influential friends or relatives, who were sure by such a present to appreciate our titles to promotion.

Each day our sportsmen brought home a fair propor-

tion of loons and little auks, the latter bird flying in immense flocks to all the neighbouring pools of water, and to kill ten or twelve of them at a shot, when settled to feed, was not considered as derogatory to the character of a Nimrod, where the question was a purely gastronomic one. I found in my shooting excursions an India-rubber boat, constructed upon a plan of my dear friend Peter Halkett, to be extremely convenient. In it I floated down the cracks of water, landed on floe-pieces, crossed them dragging my boat, and again launched into water in search of my feathered friends. At the Whale-Fish Islands, much to the delight of my Esquimaux friends, I had paddled about in the inflated boat, and its portability seemed fully to be appreciated by them, though they found fault with the want of speed, in which it fell far short of their own fairy craft.

The separation of the squadron, occasioned by either mistake or accident, detained us for a few days in the beginning of August, in order that junction might again take place. Penny, by dint of hard tracking and heaving, gained seven miles upon us. For several days a schooner, a ketch, and a single-masted craft, had been seen far to the southward. They were now rapidly closing, and we made them out to be the Felix, Admiral Sir John Ross, with his boat towing astern, and the Prince Albert, belonging to Lady Franklin, in charge of Commander Forsyth.

August 5.—Plenty of water. The Assistance received orders to proceed (when her consort, the Intrepid, joined her) to the north shore of Lancaster Sound, examine it and Wellington Channel, and having assured themselves

that Franklin had not gone up by that route to the N.W., to meet us between Cape Hotham and Cape Walker. I regretted that the shore upon which the first traces would undoubtedly be found should have fallen to another's share; however, as there seemed a prospect of separation, and, by doing so, progress, I was too rejoiced to give it a second thought; and that the Assistance would do her work well was apparent to all who witnessed the zeal and skill displayed by her people in the most ordinary duty.

Taking in our ice-anchors, and getting hold of the Resolute, I bid my friends of the Assistance good-bye, thinking that advance was now likely. This hope soon failed me, for again we made fast, and again we all waited for one another.

Amongst many notes of the superiority of steam over manual labour in the ice, I will extract two made to-day.

The Assistance was towed by the Intrepid, in fifteen minutes, a distance which it took the Resolute, followed by the Pioneer, from 10 A.M. to 3 P.M. to track and warp.

The Intrepid steamed to a berg in ten minutes, and got past it. The rest of the squadron, by manual labour, succeeded in accomplishing the same distance in three hours and a half, namely, from 7 P.M. to 10.30 P.M., by which time the ice had closed ahead, and we had to make fast.

August 6 *and* 7.—Very little progress: and a squadron of blank faces showed that there were many taking a deep and anxious interest in the state of affairs. The remark that Sir James Ross's expedition was by this time, in 1848, in a better position than ourselves,

and only found time to secure winter quarters at Leopold Island, was constantly heard: there was, in fact, but one hope left—we had steam, and there were yet thirty days of open navigation.

Friday the 9th of August at last arrived. Captain Penny's squadron was gone out of sight in a lane of water towards Cape York. The schooner and ketch were passing us—naval routine of precedence yielded to the grim necessity of a push for our very safety's sake: the big ship was dropped out of the nip, the Pioneer again allowed to put her wedge-bow, aided by steam, to the crack. In one hour we were past a barrier which had checked our advance for three long weary days. All was joy and excitement; the steamers themselves seemed to feel and know their work, and exceeded even our sanguine expectations; and, to every one's delight, we were this evening allowed to carry on a system of ice-breaking which will doubtless, in future arctic voyages, be carried out with great success. For instance, a piece of a floe, two or three hundred yards broad, and three feet thick, prevented our progress; the weakest and narrowest part being ascertained, the ships were secured as close as possible without obstructing the steam-vessels, the major part of the crews being despatched to the line where the cut was to be made, with tools and gunpowder for blasting, and plenty of short hand-lines and claws.

The Pioneer and Intrepid then in turn rushed at the floe, breaking their way through it until the impetus gained in the open water was lost by the resistance of the ice. The word "Stop her! Back turn, easy!" was then given, and the screw went astern, carrying

with her tons of ice, by means of numerous lines which the blue-jackets, who attended on the forecastle, and others on broken pieces of the floe, held on by. As the one vessel went astern the other flew ahead to her work. The operation was, moreover, aided by the explosions of powder; and altogether the scene was a highly interesting and instructive one: it was a fresh laurel in the screw's wreath; the gallant Intrepid gave a *coup-de-grace* to the mass, which sent it coach-wheeling round, as it is termed; and the whole of the squadron taking the nip, as arctic ships should do, we were next morning in the true lead, and our troubles in Melville Bay were at an end.

It was now the 10th of August. By heavens! I shall never forget the lightheartedness of that day. Forty days had we been beset in the ice. There was no time to be lost. The air was calm, the water was smooth; the land-floe, for we had again reached it in 74½° north latitude, lay on the one hand; on the other the pack, from whose grip we had just escaped, still threatened us. Penny had been out of sight some time, and the Felix and Prince Albert were nearly ten miles ahead!

Gentle reader, I'll bore you no longer. We had calm water and steam—the ships in tow—our progress rapid—the Albert and Felix were caught—their news joyfully received—and they taken in tow likewise. The dates from England were a month later than our own: all our friends were well—all hopeful; and, putting those last dear letters away, to be read and re-read during the coming winter, we pushed on, and it was full time. Several nights before we escaped from the pack

the frost had been intense, and good sliding was to be had on the pools formed by the summer heat on the floes. The bay-ice* was forming fast, and did not all melt during the day. The birds had finished breeding; and, with the fresh millions that had been added to their numbers, were feeding up preparatory to their departure south. The sun was sweeping, *nightly*, nearer and nearer to the northern horizon. Night once set in, we knew full well the winter would come with giant strides. "Push on, good screw!" was on every one's lip; and anxiety was seen on every brow, if by accident, or for any purpose, the propeller ceased to move. "What's the matter? All right, I hope?" Then a chuckle of satisfaction at being told that "nothing was amiss."

Time did not allow us, or I verily believe we might have killed tons of birds between Cape Walker and Cape York, principally little auks (*Alca alle*);—they actually blackened the edge of the floe for miles. I had seen, on the coast of Peru, near the guano isles, what I thought was an inconceivable number of birds congregated together; but they were as nothing compared with the myriads that we disturbed in our passage, and their stupid tameness would have enabled us to kill as many as we pleased.

On August 13th, Cape York being well in sight, Penny's brigs were again in view; and whilst the Intrepid and Assistance, with the Prince Albert, communicated with the natives of Cape York, the Pioneer pushed on, and soon passed the brigs, who, although they knew

* First winter ice, or young ice, is called bay-ice, from an old Yorkshire word *bay*, to bend.—*Author.*

full well that the late arrivals from England had letters for them, were to be seen pushing, tooth and nail, to get to the westward.

Slow—as slow as possible—we steamed all day along the "crimson cliffs of Beverley." The interview with the natives of Cape York, alas, was to cost us much. My frame of mind at the time was far from heavenly; for "large water" was ahead, our squadron many a long mile from its work, and I was neither interested, at the time, in arctic highlanders or crimson snow.* In the evening the Assistance joined us; and I was told that "important information had been gained." We were to turn back; and the Intrepid went in chase of Penny, to get the aid of his interpreter, Mr Petersen.

I remember being awoke at six o'clock on the morning of the 14th of August, and being told a hobgoblin story, which made me rub my eyes, and doubt my own hearing. What I thought of it is neither here nor there. Suffice it that one Adam Beck, an Esquimaux cross-breed—may he be branded for a liar!—succeeded, that day, in misleading a large number of her Majesty's officers, and in detaining for two days the squadrons in search of Franklin. No one with common perception who witnessed the interview on our deck between Mr Petersen, Adam Beck, and our new shipmate, an Esquimaux from Cape York, could fail to perceive that Mr

* It was at Cape York that the late Sir John Ross first discovered "red snow" in large quantities. It led to much controversy amongst wise men of 1818, but it has since been accepted as a fact and explained away by the microscope. The crimson colour of the snow is occasioned by the presence of vegetable matter in a most minute and delicate form.

Petersen and the Cape York native understood one another much better than the latter could the vile Adam Beck; and had I had any doubts upon the subject, they would have been removed when I learnt that Petersen had seen and communicated with these very natives before our squadron came up, and that no such bloody tale had been told him; in fact, it was the pure coinage of Adam Beck's brain, cunningly devised to keep, at any rate, his own ship on a coast whither he could escape to the neighbourhood of his home in South Greenland.

The fact of the North Star having wintered last year in Wolstenholme Sound, or Petowack, was elicited, and that the natives had been on board of her. The Assistance and Intrepid, therefore, remained to visit that neighbourhood, whilst we proceeded across the Bay of Baffin to the south shore of Lancaster Sound, touching, as had been pre-arranged, at Ponds Bay and Cape Possession.

Steaming along the Crimson Cliffs for a second time, we left the Lady Franklin and Sophia, in a stark calm, to do their best. Fewer ships, the faster progress; and heartily did all cheer when, at midnight, we turned to the N.W., leaving the second division to do their work in Wolstenholme Sound.

On the 15th of August we struck westward, that is, the Pioneer, with Resolute and Prince Albert in tow. After four hours of very tortuous navigation, called "reeving through the pack," we reached the West Water—a wide ocean of water without one piece of floe-ice, and very few icebergs. The change was wonderful —incredible. Here was nothing but water; and we

were almost within sight, as we steered to the S.W., of the spot where, for forty-seven days, we had had nothing but ice! ice! ice! Let us hurry on. The West Water (as usual with the water at this season of the year) was covered with fog: in it we steered. The Resolute, as a capital joke, in return for the long weary miles we had towed her, set, on one occasion, all studsails, and gave us a tow for four hours. When off the mouth of Lancaster Sound, the Prince Albert was cast off; and she departed to carry out, as we fancied, a part of the grand scheme of sledge-travelling next year, into which it became almost daily apparent the search for Franklin would resolve itself. Already had night commenced; next came winter.

Touching at Ponds Bay was made a longer proceeding than was ever calculated upon, for a succession of thick fogs and strong gales prevented the Pioneer running into the bay, or ascertaining whether cairns or other marks had been erected on the coast.

The 21st of August came before we had a change of weather: happily it then took place; and the Pioneer (having some days before left the Resolute, to cruise off Possession Bay) entered Ponds Bay, running up the northern shore towards a place called Button Point.

The "West Land," as this side of Baffin Bay is called, strikes all seamen, after struggling through the icy region of Melville Bay, as being verdant and comparatively genial. We all thought so, and feasted our eyes on valleys, which, in our now humbled taste, were voted beautiful. At any rate there were signs and symptoms of verdure; and as we steered close along the coast,

green and russet colours were detected and pointed out with delight. The bay was calm and glassy, and the sun to the west, sweeping along a water horizon, showed pretty plainly that Ponds Bay, like a good many more miscalled bays of this region, was nothing more than the bell-shaped mouth to some long fiord or strait.

One of my ice-quartermasters, a highly intelligent seaman, assured me he had been in a whale-boat up this very inlet, until they conjectured themselves to be fast approaching Admiralty Inlet; the country improved much in appearance, and in one place they found abundance of natives, deer, and *grass* as high as his knees. I landed with a boat's crew on Button Point. The natives had retired into the interior to kill deer and salmon: this they are in the habit of doing every season when the land-ice breaks up. Numerous unroofed winter habitations and carefully secured *caches* of seal-blubber proved that they had been here in some numbers, and would return to winter after the ice had again formed in the bay, and the seals began to appear, upon which the existence of the Esquimaux depends.

On first landing we had been startled by observing numerous cairns, standing generally in pairs: these we pulled down one after the other, and examined without finding anything in them; and it was only the accidental discovery by one of the men of a seal-blubber *cache*, that showed that the cairns were merely marks by which the Esquimaux, on their return in the winter, could detect their stores.

The winter abode of these Esquimaux appeared to be sunk from three to four feet below the level of the

ground: a ring of stones, a few feet high, were all the vestiges we saw. No doubt they completed the habitation by building a house of snow of the usual dome shape over the stones and sunken floor. Having no wood, whale-bones had been here substituted for rafters; this is usual along the whole breadth of the American coast-line from Behring Strait; but many of the hovels had no rafters. On the whole, the impression was, that the natives here lived in a state of much greater barbarity and discomfort than those we had seen about the Danish settlements on the opposite shore.

A cairn was erected by us; a record and some letters deposited for the natives to put on board whalers at a future season: and having placed a number of presents for the poor creatures in the different huts and on the *caches*, we hurried on board, and made the best of our way to Possession Bay, to rejoin the Resolute. From her we learnt that the North Star had placed a record there, to say that after having failed to cross Baffin Bay in 1849, she had done so in 1850, and had gone up Lancaster Sound to seek the Enterprise and Investigator, under Sir James Ross, they having, as we knew, meanwhile gone home, been paid off, recommissioned, and were now, please God, in the Arctic Ocean, by way of Behring Strait.

August 22, 1850.—The Resolute in company, and steering a course up Lancaster Sound.

The great gateway, within whose portals we were now fast entering, has much in it that is interesting to an English seaman. Across its mouth, the bold navigator

Baffin, 200 years before, had steered, pronounced it a sound, and named it after the Duke of Lancaster. About thirty-five years ago it was converted into a bay by Sir John Ross; and within eighteen months afterwards, Parry, the prince of arctic navigators, sailed through this very bay, and discovered new lands extending half of the distance towards Behring Strait, or about 600 miles. To complete the remaining 600 miles of unknown region, Sir John Franklin and his 140 gallant followers had devoted themselves,—with what resolution, with what devotion, is best told by their long absence and our anxiety.

The high and towering ranges of the Byam Martin Mountains looked down upon us from the southern sky, between fast passing fog-banks and fitful gusts of wind, which soon sobbed themselves into a calm, when steam, as usual, came to our aid. With it the Pioneer, towing the Resolute astern, steered for the north shore of Lancaster Sound. On August 25th we were off Croker Bay, a deep indentation between Cape Warrender and Cape Home. The clouds hung too heavily about the land, distant as we were, to see more than the bare outline, but its broken configuration gave good hope of numerous harbours, fiords, and creeks. From Cape Home, we entered on a new and peculiar region of limestone formation, lofty and tabular, offering to the seaboard cliffs steep and escarped as the imagination can picture. By the beautiful sketches of Parry's officers, made on his first voyage, we easily recognised the various headlands, the north shore being now alone in view; and, indeed, except the mountains in the interior,

we saw nothing more of the south shore of Lancaster Sound after leaving Possession Bay.

Off Powell Inlet we saw an extensive glacier extending into the sound, and a few loose 'berg-pieces floating about. This glacier was regarded with some interest; for, remarkably enough, it is the last one met with in sailing westward to Melville Island.

The iceberg, as it is well known, is the creation of the glacier; and where land of a nature to form the latter does not exist, the former is not met with.

The region we had just left behind us is the true home of the iceberg in the northern hemisphere. There, in Baffin Bay, where the steep cliffs of cold granitic formation frown over waters where the ordinary "deep-sea lead-line" fails to find bottom, the monarch of glacial formations floats slowly from the ravine which has been its birthplace, until fairly launched into the profound waters of the ocean, and in the course of many years is carried to the warmer regions of the Atlantic, to assist nature in preserving her great laws of equilibrium of temperature of the air and water.

At one period—and not a very distant one either—savants, and, amongst others, the French philosopher St Pierre, believed icebergs to be the accumulated snow and ice of ages upon an arctic sea, which, forming at the poles, detached themselves from the parent mass: this, as they then thought, had no reference to the existence of land or water. Such an hypothesis for some time gave rise to ingenious and startling theories as to the effect which an incessant accumulation of ice would have on the globe itself; and St Pierre hinted at

the possibility of the huge cupolas of ice, which, as he believed, towered aloft in the cold heavens of the poles, suddenly launching towards the equator, melting, and bringing about a second deluge.

Had the immortal Cook been aware of the certainty of land being close to him, when, in the antarctic regions, he found himself amongst no less than 186 icebergs in December 1773, he who, from the deck of a collier, had risen to be the Columbus of England, might have then plucked the laurel which Sir James Ross so gallantly won in the discovery of the circumpolar continent of Queen Victoria Land.

On every side of the southern pole, on every meridian of the great South Sea, the seaman meets icebergs. Not so in the north. In the 360 degrees of longitude which intersect the parallel of 70° north (about which parallel the coasts of America, Europe, and Asia will be found to lie), icebergs are only found over an extent of some fifty-five degrees of longitude, and this is immediately in and about Greenland and Baffin Bay. In fact, for 1375 miles of longitude we have icebergs, and then for 7635 geographical miles none are met with. This interesting fact is, in my opinion, most cheering, and points strongly to the possibility that no extensive land exists about our northern pole,—a supposition which is borne out by the fact, that the vast ice-fields off Spitzbergen show no symptoms of ever having been in contact with land or gravel. Of course, the more firmly we of the expedition can bring ourselves to believe in the existence of an ocean-road leading to Behring Strait, the better heart we shall feel in searching the

various tortuous channels and different islands with which, doubtless, Franklin's route has been beset. It was not, therefore, without deep interest that I passed the boundary which nature had set in the west to the existence of icebergs, and endeavoured to form a correct idea of the cause of such a phenomenon.

Whilst this digression upon icebergs has taken place, the kind reader will suppose the calm to have ceased, and the Resolute and Pioneer, under sail before a westerly wind, to be running from the table-land on the north shore of Lancaster Sound, in a diagonal direction towards Leopold Island. On the 26th of August Cape York gleamed through an angry sky, and as Regent Inlet opened to the southward, there was little doubt but we should soon be caught in an arctic gale: we, however, cared little, provided there was plenty of water ahead, though of that there appeared strong reasons for entertaining doubts, as the temperature of both the air and water was fast falling.

That night—for night was now of some two hours' duration—the wind piped merrily, and we rolled most cruelly, the long and narrow Pioneer threatening to pitch every spar over the side, and refusing all the manœuvring upon the part of her beshaken officers and men to comfort and quiet her.

A poet, who had not been fourteen hours in the cold, and whose body was not racked by constant gymnastic exertion to preserve his bones from fracture, might have given a beautiful description of the lifting of a fierce sky at about half-past one in the morning, and a disagreeable glimpse through snow-storm and squall of a bold and

precipitous coast not many miles off, and ahead of us. I cannot undertake to do so, for I remember feeling far from poetical as, with a jerk and a roll, the Pioneer, under fore-and-aft canvass, came to the wind. Fast increasing daylight showed us to have been thrown considerably to the northward; and as we hauled to the south the ice showed itself in far from pleasing proximity under the lee—*boiling*, for so the edge of a pack appears to do in a gale of wind. It was a wild sight; but we felt that, at any rate, it was optional with a screw steamer whether she ran into the pack or kept the sea, for her clawing-to-windward power astonished us who had fought in the teeth of hard gales elsewhere in flying Symondite brigs. Not so, however, thought a tough old Hull quartermaster, whose weather-beaten face peered anxiously over the lee, and watched the Resolute beating Cromer-a-lee, for I heard him growl out, "Wull, if they are off a strait lee-pack edge, the sooner they make up their mind to run into it the better!" "Why so, Hall?" I inquired. "Because, sir," replied the old man, "that ship is going two feet to leeward for one she is going ahead, and she would *never* work off *nothing!*"

"Pleasant!" I mentally ejaculated; but, willing to hear more from my dry old friend, who was quite a character in his way,—"Perhaps," I said, "you have occasionally been caught in worse vessels off such a pack as you describe, on a lee shore, and still not been lost?"

"Oh! Lord, sir! we have some rum craft in the whaling-ships, but I don't think anything so sluggish as the Resolute. Howsomdever, they gets put to it now

and then. Why, it was only last year we were down on the south-west fishing-ground. About the 10th of October it came on to blow, sir, from the southward, and sent in a sea upon us which nearly smothered us; we tried to keep an offing, but it was no use; we couldn't show a rag; everything was blown away, and it was perishing cold; but our captain was a smart man, and he said, 'Well, boys, we must run for Hangman's Cove,* although it's late in the day; if we don't, I won't answer where we'll be in the morning.'

"So up we put the helm, sir, to run for a place like a hole in a wall, with nothing but a close-reefed topsail set, and the sky as thick as pea-soup. It looked a bad job, I do assure you, sir. Just as it was dark, we found ourselves right up against the cliffs, and we did not know whether we were lost or saved until by good luck we shot into dead smooth water in a little cove, and let go our anchor. Next day a calm set in, and the young ice made round the ship: we couldn't cut it, and we couldn't tow the vessel through it. We had not three months' provisions, and we made certain sure of being starved to death, when the wind came strong off the land, and, by working for our lives, we escaped, and went home directly out of the country."

"A cheering tale, this, of the Hangman's Cove," I thought, as I turned from my Job's comforter; and, satisfying myself that the pack precluded all chance of reaching Leopold Island for the present, I retired to rest.

Next day, the 27th of August, found us steering past

* Hangman's Cove, a small harbour on the west side of Davis Strait.

Cape Hurd, off which the pack lay at a distance of some ten miles, and, as we ran westward, and the breadth of clear water gradually diminished, the wind failed us. Astern in Lancaster Sound, there was still a dark and angry sky, betokening a war of the elements; whereas, where we were—off Radstock Bay—all was calm, cold, and arctic.

"Up steam, and take in tow!" was again the cry; and as the pack, acted on by the tide, commenced to travel quickly in upon Cape Ricketts, we slipped past it, and reached an elbow formed between that headland and Beechey Island. The peculiar patch of broken table-land, called Caswell's Tower, as well as the striking cliffs of slaty limestone along whose base we were rapidly steaming, claimed much of our attention; but we were pained to see, from the strong ice-blink to the S.W., that a body of packed ice had been driven up the straits by the late gale.

The sun was fast dipping behind North Devon, and a beautiful moon, the first moon that perpetual daylight had allowed us to appreciate since passing Cape Farewell on the 28th of May, was cheerfully accepted as a substitute, when the report of a boat being seen from the mast-head startled us and excited general anxiety. We were then off Gascoigne Inlet, the Resolute in tow. The boat proved to be the Sophia's, and in her Captain Stewart and Dr Sutherland. They went on board the Resolute, and, shortly afterwards, the interesting intelligence they then communicated was made known to me.

It was this: the Assistance and Intrepid, after they left us, had visited Wolstenholme Sound, and discovered

the winter quarters of H.M.S. North Star, but nothing to lead them to place any faith in Adam Beck's tale; from thence they had examined the north shore of Lancaster Sound as far as Cape Riley, without discovering anything. On landing there, however, numerous traces of English seamen having visited the spot were discovered in sundry pieces of rag, rope, broken bottles, and a long-handled instrument intended to rake up things from the bottom of the sea; marks of a tent-place were likewise visible. A cairn was next seen on Beechey Island; to this the Intrepid proceeded; and as rather an odd incident connected with her search of this spot took place, I shall here mention it, although it was not until afterwards that the circumstance came to my knowledge.

The steamer having approached close under the island, a boat full of officers and men proceeded on shore. On landing, some relics of European visitors were found; and we can picture the anxiety with which the steep was scaled and the cairn torn down, every stone turned over, the ground underneath dug up a little, and yet, alas! no document or record found. Meanwhile an arctic adventure, novel to some of the actors, was taking place. The boat had left the Intrepid without arms of any description, and the people on the top of the cliff saw, to their dismay, a large white bear advancing rapidly in the direction of the boat, which, by the deliberate way the brute stopped and raised his head as if in the act of smelling, appeared to disturb his olfactory nerves. The two men left in charge of the boat happily caught sight of Bruin before he caught hold of them, and launching the boat they hurried off to the steamer, whilst the ob-

servers left on the cliff were not sorry to see the bear chase the boat a short way and then turn towards the packed ice in the offing. This event, together with some risk of the ice separating the two vessels, induced the party to return on board, where a general, though, as was afterwards proved, erroneous impression had been created on the minds of the people belonging to the two ships, *that what they had found must be the traces of a retreating or shipwrecked party from the Erebus and Terror.* A short distance within Cape Riley, another tent-place was found; and then, after a look at the coast up as far as Cape Innis, the two vessels proceeded across towards Cape Hotham, on the opposite side of Wellington Channel, having in the first place erected a cairn at the base of Cape Riley, and in it deposited a document.

Whilst the Assistance and Intrepid were so employed, the American squadron, and that under Captain Penny, were fast approaching. The Americans first communicated with Captain Ommanney's squadron, and heard of the discovery of the first traces of Sir John Franklin. The Americans then informed Penny, who was pushing for Wellington Channel; and he, after some trouble, succeeded in catching the Assistance, and, on going on board of her, learnt all they had to tell him, and saw what traces they had discovered. Captain Penny then returned, as he figuratively expressed it, "to take up the search from Cape Riley like a blood-hound," and richly was he rewarded for doing so.

At Cape Spencer he discovered the ground-plan of a tent, the floor of which was neatly and carefully paved with small smooth stones. Around the tent a number

of birds' bones, as well as remnants of meat-canisters, led him to imagine that it had been inhabited for some time as a shooting-station and a look-out place, for which latter purpose it was admirably chosen, commanding a good view of Barrow Strait and Wellington Channel. This opinion was confirmed by the discovery of a piece of paper, on which was written "to be called"—evidently the fragment of an officer's night orders.

Some sledge-marks pointed northward from this neighbourhood; and the American squadron being unable to advance up the strait (in consequence of the ice resting firmly against the land close to Cape Innis, and across to Barlow Inlet on the opposite shore), Lieutenant de Haven despatched parties on foot to follow these sledge-marks, whilst Penny's squadron returned to re-examine Beechey Island. The American officers found the sledge-tracks very distinct for some miles, but before they had got as far as Cape Bowden the trail ceased, and one empty bottle and a piece of newspaper were the last things found in that direction.

Captain Penny's squadron, as I have said, made fast to the ice between Beechey Island and Cape Spencer, in what is now called Union Bay—in which they found the Felix schooner to be likewise lying—and parties from the Lady Franklin and Sophia started towards Beechey Island.

A long point of land slopes gradually northward from the southern bluffs of this now deeply interesting island, until it almost connects itself with the land of North Devon, forming on either side of it two good and commodious bays. On this slope, a multitude of preserved-

meat tins were strewed about, and near them and on the ridge of the slope a carefully constructed cairn was discovered: it consisted of layers of meat-tins, filled with gravel and placed to form a firm and solid foundation. Beyond this, and along the northern shore of Beechey Island, the following traces were then quickly discovered:—the embankment of a house with a carpenter's and armourer's working-places, washing-tubs, coal-bags, pieces of old clothing, rope, and, lastly, the graves of three of the crew of the Erebus and Terror—placing it beyond all doubt that the missing ships had indeed been there, and bearing date of the winter of 1845-46.

Captain Penny therefore ascertained the first winter quarters of Sir John Franklin's squadron. Here fell to the ground all the evil forebodings of those who had, in England, consigned his expedition to the depths of Baffin's Bay on its outward voyage. Our first prayer had been granted by a beneficent Providence; and we had now risen from doubt and hope to a certain assurance of Franklin having reached thus far without shipwreck or disaster.

Leaving us in high spirits at the receipt of such glorious intelligence, Captain Stewart proceeded in his boat to search the coast-line towards Gascoigne Inlet and Caswell's Tower. We continued to steam on. Off Cape Riley a boat was despatched to examine the record left by the Assistance; and from her I heard that the Prince Albert, which had been ordered by Lady Franklin down Regent Inlet to Brentford Bay, had visited the said cairn, deposited a document to say so, and was gone, I now felt certain, home.

As the Pioneer slowly steamed through the loose ice which lay off Beechey Island, the cairn erected by Franklin's people on the height above us was an object of deep interest and conversation; and, placed so conspicuously as it was, it seemed to say to the beating heart, "Follow those that erected me!"

On rounding the entrance of Wellington Channel, I forgot that we were no longer under the steep cliffs of granite common to Greenland, and that treacherous ridges of limestone ran out from the shores of Barrow Strait; anxious, too, to avoid the stream of ice now pouring out of Wellington Channel, I ran aground, the Resolute just saving herself by slipping the tow-rope and letting go an anchor. A rapidly-falling tide soon showed me that I must be patient and wait until next day; and as the Resolute was in the course of the night worked into the bay and secured, we "piped down" for a while.

Wednesday, August 28.—I was awoke by a hearty shake, and Captain Penny's warm "Good morning;" he had come out to me towing the Mary, a launch belonging to Sir John Ross, in order that I might lighten the Pioneer, and offered me the Sophia brig to receive a portion of my stores if I would only say it was necessary.

"A friend in need is a friend indeed," and such Captain Penny proved himself; for my position was far from a pleasant one—on a hard spit of limestone, in which no anchor could find holding-ground, and at low water, five feet less than the draught of the Pioneer, exposed to all the set of the ice of the Wellington

Channel and Barrow Strait, with about another week of the "open season" left.

After all arrangements had been made to float the steamer at high water, I had time to ask Captain Penny his news; the best part of which was, that as yet nothing had been found in our neighbourhood to lead to the inference that any party in distress had retreated from the Erebus and Terror. He considered the harbour chosen by Franklin for his winter quarters was an excellent one.

Captain Penny gave no very cheering account of the prospect of a much farther advance for ourselves: Wellington Channel was blocked up with a very heavy floe, and Barrow Strait to the westward was choked with packed ice; the Assistance and Intrepid were to be seen off Barlow Inlet, but their position was far from a secure one; and, lastly, Penny told me he intended, after the result of a fresh search for a record on Beechey Island was known, to communicate with the Assistance, in order that Captain Ommanney might be fully informed of all that had been discovered, and that we might learn whether anything had been found at Cape Hotham.

On the 29th of August, the Pioneer, much to my joy, was again afloat, and fast to the ice in company with the other vessels; and although my officers and crew were well fagged out with forty-eight hours' hard labour, parties of them, myself amongst the number, were to be seen trudging across the ice of Union Bay towards Franklin's winter quarters.

It needed not a dark wintry sky or a gloomy day to throw a sombre shade around my feelings as I landed

on Beechey Island, and looked down upon the bay on whose bosom had ridden her Majesty's ships Erebus and Terror. There was a sickening anxiety of the heart as one involuntarily clutched at every relic they of Franklin's squadron had left behind, in the vain hope that some clue as to the route they had taken hence might be found.

From the cairn to the long and curving beach, from the frozen surface of the bay to the tops of the distant cliffs, the eye involuntarily but keenly sought for something more than had yet been found.

But, no! as sharp eyes, as anxious hearts, had already been there; and I was obliged to be content with the information, which my observation proved to be true, that the search had been close and careful, but that nothing was to be found in the shape of written record.

On the eastern slope of the ridge of Beechey Island a remnant of a garden (for remnant it now only was, having been dug up in the search) told an interesting tale: its neatly-shaped oval outline, the border carefully formed of moss, lichen, poppies, and anemones, transplanted from some more genial part of this dreary region, contrived still to show symptoms of vitality; but the seeds which doubtless they had sown in the garden had decayed away. A few hundred yards lower down, a mound, the foundation of a storehouse, was next to be seen.

It consisted of an exterior and interior embankment, into which, from the remnants left, we saw that oak and elm scantling had been stuck as props to the roofing. In one part of the enclosed space some coal-sacks were found, and in another part numerous wood-shavings

proved the ships' artificers to have been working here. The generally received opinion as to the object of this storehouse was, that Franklin had constructed it to shelter a portion of those superabundant provisions and stores with which it was well known his decks were lumbered on leaving Whale Fish Islands.

Nearer to the beach a heap of cinders and scraps of iron showed the armourer's working-place; and along an old watercourse, now chained up by frost, several tubs, constructed of the ends of salt-meat casks, left no doubt as to the washing-places of the men of Franklin's squadron. Happening to cross a level piece of ground which as yet no one had lighted upon, I was pleased to see a pair of Cashmere gloves laid out to dry, with two small stones on the palms to prevent their blowing away; they had been there since 1846. I took them up carefully, as melancholy mementos of my missing friends. In another spot a flannel was discovered: and this, together with other things lying about, would, in my ignorance of wintering in the arctic regions, have led me to suppose that there was considerable haste displayed in the departure of the Erebus and Terror from this spot, had not subsequent experience of the haste with which an arctic expedition always quits its winter prison convinced me of these relics being nothing more than the ordinary traces of a winter station; and this opinion was fully borne out by those officers who had in the previous year wintered at Port Leopold, one of them asserting very truly that people left winter quarters too well pleased to escape to care much for a handful of shavings, an old coal-bag, or a washing-tub.

Looking at the spot on which Penny had discovered a boarding-pike, and comparing it with a projecting point on the opposite side, where a similar article had been found with a finger nailed on it as a direction-post, I concluded that, in a line between these two boarding-pikes, one or both of the ships had been at anchor, and this conjecture was much borne out by the relative positions of the other traces found; and besides this, a small cairn on the crest of Beechey Island appears to have been intended as a meridian mark; and if so, Franklin's squadron undoubtedly lay where I would place it, far and effectually removed from all risk of being swept out of the bay—which, by the by, from the fact of the enclosed area being many times broader than the entrance of Erebus and Terror Bay, was about as probable as any stout gentleman being blown out of a house through the keyhole. In the one case the stout individual would have to be cut up small, in the other case the ice would have to be well broken up; and if so, it was not likely Franklin would allow himself to be taken out of harbour *nolens volens*, whilst he had anchors to hook the ground with, and ice-saws with which his crews could have cut through *a mile of ice three feet thick in twenty-four hours.*

The graves next attracted our attention; they, like all that English seamen construct, were scrupulously neat. Go where you will over the globe's surface—afar in the East or afar in the West, down amongst the coral-girded isles of the South Sea or here where the grim North frowns on the sailor's grave—you will always find it alike; it is the monument raised by rough hands but affection-

ate hearts over the last home of their messmate; it breathes of the quiet churchyard in some of England's many nooks, where each had formed his idea of what was due to departed worth; and the ornaments that nature decks herself with, even in the desolation of the frozen zone, were carefully culled to mark the seamen's last home. The good taste of the officers had prevented the simplicity of an oaken head and foot-board to each of the three graves being marred by any long and childish epitaphs or the doggerel of a lower-deck poet; and the three inscriptions were as follows:—

"Sacred to the memory of J. Torrington, who departed this life, January 1, 1846, on board of H.M.S. Terror, aged 20 years."

"Sacred to the memory of Wm. Braine, R.M., of H.M.S. Erebus; died April 3, 1846, aged 32 years.

"'Choose ye this day whom ye will serve.'—Josh. xxiv. 15."

"Sacred to the memory of J. Hartwell, A.B., of H.M.S. Erebus; died January 4, 1846, aged 25 years.

"'Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, Consider your ways.' —Haggai, i. 7."

I thought I traced in the epitaphs over the graves of the men from the Erebus the manly and Christian spirit of Franklin. In the true spirit of chivalry, he, their captain and leader, led them amidst dangers and unknown difficulties with iron will, but the words of gentleness

and truth were his device. We have seen his career, and we know his deeds!

> "Why should their praise in verse be sung?
> The name that dwells on every tongue
> No minstrel needs."

From the graves a tedious ascent up the long northern slope of Beechey Island carried us to the table-land, on whose southern verge a cairn of stones, to which I have before referred, was placed. It had been several times pulled down by different searchers, and dug up underneath, but carefully replaced. The position was an admirable one, and appeared as if intentionally chosen to attract the attention of vessels coming up Barrow Strait. From it, on the day I was up, the view was so extensive that, did I not feel certain of being supported by all those who have, like myself, witnessed the peculiar clearness, combined with refraction, of the atmosphere in polar climes, I should bear in mind the French adage—"La verité n'est pas toujours le vraisemblable," and hold my peace.

To the west, the land of Cornwallis Island stretched up Wellington Channel for many miles, and Cape Hotham locked with Griffith Island. In the south-west a dark mass of land showed Cape Walker, and from Cape Bunny the southern shore of Barrow Strait spread itself until terminated in the steep wall-like cliffs of Cape Clarence and Leopold Island.

This latter spot, so interesting from having been the winter quarters of the late searching squadron under Sir James Ross, looked ridiculously close. To use a seaman's term, it appeared as if a biscuit might have been tossed

upon it; and the thought involuntarily arose to one's mind,—Would to God that, in 1848, Sir James Ross had known that within forty miles of him Franklin had wintered!

On the eastern extreme of Beechey Island, and under a beetling cliff which formed the entrance to the bay, a very neatly paved piece of ground denoted a tent-place. Much pains had been bestowed upon it, and a pigmy terrace had been formed around the abode, the margin of which was decorated with moss and poppy plants. In an adjacent gully a shooting-gallery had been established, the ranges marked off by stones placed at proper distances, and a large tin marked "Soup and Bouilli," perforated with balls, had served for a target. I carefully scanned the flat slabs of slaty limestone of which the overhanging cliffs were formed in hopes of seeing some name or date scratched upon the surface,—some clue, mayhap, to the information we so dearly longed for—the route taken by Franklin on sailing hence, whether to Cape Walker or up Wellington Channel,—but no! the silent cliff bore no mark. By some fatality the proverbial love for marking their names or telling their tales on every object, which I have ever found in seamen, was here an exception; and I turned to my vessel, after three unprofitable walks on Beechey Island, with the sad conviction that, instead of being able to concentrate the wonderful resources we had now at hand about Beechey Island in one line of search, we should be obliged to take up the three routes which it was probable Franklin might have taken in 1846—viz., S.W. by Cape Walker, N.W. by Wellington Channel, or W. by Melville Island—a

division of force tending to weaken the chance of reaching Franklin as quickly as we could wish, unless circumstances were peculiarly favourable.

Vague reports of some of Captain Penny's people having seen sledge-marks on the eastern shores of Erebus and Terror Bay, induced one of the officers of the Pioneer and myself to arrange with Captain Penny to take a walk in that direction.

Landing on the north shore of Union Bay, at the base of the cliffs of Cape Spencer, we were soon pointed out a deep sledge-mark, which had cut through the edge of one of the ancient tide-marks or terraces, and pointed in a direct line from the cairn of meat-tins erected by Franklin on the northern spur of Beechey Island, to a valley which led towards the bay between Capes Innis and Bowden. I conceived the trail to be that of an outward-bound sledge, on account of its depth, which denoted a heavily-laden one.

Proceeding onward, our party were all much struck with the extraordinary regularity of the terraces, which, with almost artificial parallelism, swept round the base of the limestone cliffs and hills of North Devon. That they were ancient tidal marks, now raised to a considerable elevation above the sea by the upheaval of the land, I was the more inclined to believe, from the numerous fossil shells, crustacea, and corallines which strewed the ground. These last, witnesses to a once more genial condition of climate in these now inclement regions, carried us back to the sun-blest climes where the blue Pacific lashes the coral-guarded isles of sweet Otaheite; and I must plead guilty to a recreant sigh for past recollections

and dear friends, all summoned up by the contemplation of a fragment of fossil coral.

The steep abutment of the cliffs on the north of Erebus and Terror Bay obliged us to descend to the floe, along the surface of which we rapidly progressed, passing the point on which the pike used by Franklin's people as a direction-post had been found. At a point where these said cliffs receded to the N.E., and towards the head of Gascoigne Inlet, leaving a long strip of low land, which, connecting itself with the bluffs of Cape Riley, forms the division between Gascoigne Inlet and Erebus and Terror Bay, a perfect congeries of sledge-marks showed the spot used for the landing-place or rendezvous of Franklin's sledges.

Some of these sledge-marks swept towards Cape Riley, doubtless towards the traces found by the Assistance; others, and those of heavily-laden sledges, ran northward into a gorge through the hills; whilst the remainder pointed towards Caswell's Tower, a remarkable mass of limestone which, isolated at the bottom of Radstock Bay, forms a conspicuous object to a vessel approaching this neighbourhood from the eastward or westward.

Deciding to follow the latter trail, we separated the party in such a manner, that, if one lost the sledge-marks, others would pick them up.

Arriving at the margin of a lake, which was only one of a series, and tasted decidedly brackish, though its connection with the sea was not apparent, we found the site of a circular tent, unquestionably that of a shooting-party from the Erebus or Terror. The stones used for keeping down the canvass lay around; three or four large ones,

well blackened by smoke, had been the fireplace. A porter-bottle or two, several meat-tins, pieces of paper, birds' feathers, and scraps of the fur of arctic hares, were strewed about. Eagerly did we run from one object to the other in the hope of finding some stray note or record to say whether all had been well with them, and whither they had gone. No, not a line was to be found. Disappointed, but not beaten, we turned to follow up the trail.

The sledge-marks consisted of two parallel lines, about two feet apart, and sometimes three or four inches deep into the gravel or broken limestone, of which the whole plain seemed to be formed; the difficulty of dragging a sledge over such ground, and under such circumstances, must have been great, and, between the choice of evils, the sledge parties appeared at last to have preferred taking to the slope of the hills, as being easier travelling than the stony plain. A fast-rising gale, immediately in our faces, with thick driving snow and drift, suddenly obscured the land about us, and rendered our progress difficult and hazardous.

After edging to the northward for some time, as if to strike the head of Gascoigne Inlet, the trail struck suddenly down upon the plain; we did the same, and as instantaneously lost our clue, though there was no doubt on any of our minds but that the sledge had gone towards Caswell's Tower. For us to go there was, however, now impossible, having no compass, and the snow-storm preventing us seeing more than a few hundred yards ahead.*

* Some cairns without any records in them were subsequently discovered at Caswell's Tower. It had evidently been a shooting-station for wild fowl and arctic hares.

We therefore turned back, walking across the higher grounds direct for the head of Union Bay, a route which gave us considerable insight into the ravine-rent condition of this limestone country, at much cost of bodily fatigue. The glaciers, or rather frozen snow-drifts, in the ravines, hardly deserved the name, after the monsters we had seen in Baffin Bay, and I should think, in ordinary seasons, they often melted away altogether, for, in spite of so severe a one as the present year had been, there was but little ice remaining.

The gale raged fiercely as the day drew on, and on getting sight of Wellington Channel, the wild havoc amongst the ice made us talk anxiously of that portion of our squadron which was now on the opposite or lee side of the channel, as well as of the American squadron that had pushed up to the edge of the fixed ice beyond Point Innis.

Seven hours' hard walking left us pretty well done up by the time we tumbled into our boat; and, thanks to the stalwart strokes of Captain Stewart's oar, we soon reached the Pioneer, and enjoyed our dinner with more than the usually keen appetite of arctic seamen.

I have now enumerated all the important traces left by Sir John Franklin's squadron in its first wintering place. To them at all hours of the day and night parties from the eight vessels in our company were constantly wending their way. Every one felt that there was something so inexplicable in the non-discovery of any record, some written evidence of the intentions of Franklin and Crozier on leaving this spot, that each of us kept on returning to again search over the ground, in the hope that it had

been merely overlooked in the feverish haste of the first discovery of the cairns by Captain Ommanney and Captain Penny.

One great good, however, resulted from the discovery of these traces—the safe passage of Franklin across the dangers of Baffin Bay was no longer a question. This was a certainty, and it only remained for us to ascertain which route he had taken, and then to follow him.

Wellington Channel engrossed much attention. The Americans, under De Haven, watched the ice in it most keenly. The gallant commander of their expedition had already more than once pushed his craft up an angle of water north of Point Innis; his second, Mr Griffin, in the Rescue, was hard at work obtaining angles by which to ascertain the fact of Wellington Channel being a channel or a fiord, a point as yet undecided, for there was a break in the land to the N.W. which left the question still at issue.

Captain Penny, with his vessels, got under way one day, and ran across the channel towards the Assistance, as far as the pack would allow him, and then despatched an officer with a boat to communicate our intelligence as well as his own. A sudden change of weather obliged Penny to return, and the boat's crew of the Lady Franklin on their way back, under Mr John Stuart, underwent no small risk and labour. They left the Assistance to walk to their boat, which had been hauled on the ice; a thick fog came on; the direction was with difficulty maintained; no less than eleven bears were seen prowling around the party; the boat was found by mere accident, and, after fourteen hours' incessant walking

and pulling, Mr Stuart succeeded in reaching the Lady Franklin.

"Through him we learnt that Cape Hotham and the neighbourhood of Barlow Inlet showed no sign of having been visited by Franklin, that the pack was close home against the land, and that the Assistance and Intrepid had been subject to some pressure, but were all safe and sound.

Almost every hour during our detention in Union Bay, large flights of wild fowl, principally geese and eider ducks, flew past us, as if they had come down Wellington Channel, and were making away to the southward; this certain indication of approaching winter was not to be mistaken, and we anxiously counted the hours which kept flitting past, whilst we were chained up in Union Bay.

South-easterly winds forced the pack tighter and tighter into Wellington Channel, and once or twice it threatened to beset us even in Union Bay; and on the 31st of August our position was still the same, the Americans being a little in advance, off Point Innis.

From the 1st to the 4th of September we lay wishing for an opening, the Americans working gallantly along the edge of the fixed ice of Wellington Channel, towards Barlow Inlet.

September the 5th brought the wished-for change. A lead of water. Hurrah! up steam! take in tow! every one's spirits up to the high-top-gallant of their joy; long streaks of water showing across Wellington Channel, out of which broad floe-pieces were slowly sailing, whilst a hard cold appearance in the northern sky betokened a northerly breeze.

With the Resolute fast astern, the Pioneer slipped round an extensive field of ice, as it ran aground off Cape Spencer, shutting off in our rear Captain Penny's brigs and the Felix. Another field of ice at the same time caught on Point Innis, and, unable to get past it, we again made fast, sending a boat to watch the moment the ice should float, and leave us a passage to the westward. While thus secured, we had abundant amusement and occupation in observing the movements of shoals of white whales. They were what the fishermen on board called "running" south, a term used to express the steady and rapid passage of the fish from one feeding-ground to the other. From the mast-head the water about us appeared filled with them, as they constantly rose to breathe, and hurried on, like the birds we had lately seen, to pleasanter regions in the south. That they had been north to breed was undoubted; by the number of young "calves" in every shoal. The affection between mother and young was very evident, for occasionally some stately white whale would loiter on her course as if to scrutinise the new and strange objects now floating in these solitary waters, whilst the calf, all gambols, rubbed against the mother's side, or played about her. The proverbial shyness of these fish was proved, for neither with harpoon nor rifle-ball could we succeed in capturing any of them.

It was a subject of deep interest and wonder to see this migration of animal life, and I determined, directly leisure would enable me, to search the numerous books with which we were well stored, to endeavour to satisfy my mind with some reasonable theory, founded upon the

movements of bird and fish, as to the existence of a polar ocean or a polar continent.

A sudden turn of tide floated the ice-field that had for some hours been aground on Point Innis and Cape Spencer, and carried it out of Wellington Channel. The Pioneer and Resolute were thus enabled to start across Wellington Channel towards Barlow Inlet.

Northward of us extended, in a straight line east and west, the southern edge of a body of ice, which we then imagined, in our ignorance, to be *fixed*, and extending northward,—ay, to the very pole. The day was beautifully clear, and a cold hard sky enabled us to see the land of North Somerset most distinctly, though thirty to forty miles distant, and yet nothing appeared resembling land in the northern part of Wellington Channel.

Late as it now was in the season, a fresh and favourable gale from the northward raised our spirits and hopes, and already, with the sanguine feelings of seamen, we began to calculate what distance might yet be achieved should the breeze but last for two or three days. The space to be traversed, even to Behring Strait, was a mere nothing; all our disappointments, and all our foiled anticipations, were forgotten in the lightheartedness brought about by a day of open water, and a few hours of a fair wind. As we rattled along the lane of blue water, which wound gracefully ahead to the westward, the shores of Cornwallis Island rapidly revealed themselves, and offered little that was striking or picturesque. One uniform tint of russet-brown clothed the land as the sun at eight in the evening sank behind the icebound horizon of Wellington Channel.

Novel and striking as were the colours thrown athwart the cold hard sky by the setting orb, I thought with a sigh of those gay and flickering shades which beautify the lands of the tropics when the fierce sun sinks to his western rest. No gleams of purple and gold lit up the hill-tops; no fiery streaks of sunlight streamed across the water or glittered on the wave. No! all here was cold and silent as the grave. In heaven alone there appeared sunshine and vitality:—it was rightly so. An arctic winter was fast asserting its dominion, and during the night the space of water between the pack and the floe became a sheet of young ice, about the one-eighth of an inch in thickness.

The Assistance and Intrepid were gone, it was very evident; but the American squadron was observed in Barlow Inlet. As we approached them at two o'clock in the morning, they were seen to be firing muskets. We therefore put our helms down, and performed, by the help of the screw, figures of eight in the young ice, until a boat had communicated with Commander de Haven, from whom we learnt that one of his vessels was aground in the inlet, and that it was no place for us to go into, unless we wanted to remain there. The passage to the westward, round Cape Hotham, was likewise blocked up, and no alternative remained but to make fast to the floe to the north of us. This was done, and just in time, for a smart breeze from the S.E. brought up a great deal of ice, and progress in any direction was impossible.

I had now time to observe that the floe of Wellington Channel, instead of consisting of a mass of ice (as was currently reported) about eight feet in thickness, did

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not, in average depth, exceed that of the floes of Melville Bay, although a great deal of old ice was mixed up with it, as if an old pack had been re-cemented by a winter's frost; and, of course, there would be ice of various ages mixed up in the body. Much of the ice was lying cross-wise and edgeways, so that a person desirous of looking at the Wellington Channel floe, as the accumulation of many years of continued frost, might have some grounds upon which to base his supposition. Subsequent observation, however, has shown me the fallacy of supposing that, in deep-water channels, floes continue to increase in thickness from year to year; but to that subject I will return when treating of Wellington Channel.

The closing chapter of accidents by which the navigation of 1850 was brought to a close, by the squadrons in search of Sir John Franklin, is soon told.

The Resolute and Pioneer remained, unable to move, in Wellington Channel. A northerly gale came on, after a short breeze from the S.E., and imagine our dismay in finding the vast expanse of ice, over which the eye had in vain strained to see its limit, suddenly breaking itself across in all directions, from some unseen cause, farther than (as appeared to us) a northerly gale blowing over its surface, and we, in our poor barks, in its cruel embrace, sweeping out of Wellington Channel, and towards Leopold Island! At one time the probability of being swept into the Atlantic, as Sir James Ross was in 1849, stared us disagreeably in the face, and blank indeed did we all look at such a prospect.

A calm and frosty morning ushered in the 9th of September. The pack was fast re-knitting itself, and we

were drifting with it, one mile per hour, to the S.E. Captain Penny's brigs had been seen the day before to the northward of us: they were now observed to be running down along the western shore of Wellington Channel, with the American squadron ahead of them, the latter having just escaped from a winter's imprisonment in Barlow Inlet. It was enough to tax the patience of Job. Here were we going homewards, *nolens volens*, with the young ice and packed ice, whilst all our comrades, in open water beyond the ice-fields in which we were jammed, were rattling westward-ho for Franklin's rescue. Happily just then a temporary opening of the pack enabled the steam-power again to be brought to bear, and never was it more useful. The pack was too small and broken for a vessel to warp or heave through. There was no wind "to bore" through it under sail, and the young ice in some places, owing to pressure, was nigh upon six inches thick; towing with boats was, therefore, out of the question.

The heavy-keeled Resolute fast astern, with a long scope of hawser, the Pioneer, like a prize-fighter, settled to her work, and went in and won. The struggle was a hard one—now through sludge and young ice, which gradually checked her headway, impeded as she was with another vessel astern—now in a strip of open water, mending her pace to rush at a bar of broken-up pack, which surged and sailed away as her fine bow forced through it—now cautiously approaching a nip between two heavy floe-pieces, which time and the screw wedged slowly apart—and then the hearty cheer with which our crews witnessed all obstacles overcome, and the naval

expedition again in open water, and close ahead of the one under Penny, and Commander de Haven's gallant vessels, which, under a press of canvass, were just hauling round Cape Hotham. A light air and bay ice gave a steamer every advantage.

Next day we all caught up the Assistance and Intrepid, fast at a floe edge, between Cape Bunny and Griffith Island. That this floe was not a fixed one we were assured, as the Intrepid had been between it and Griffith Island, nearly as far as Somerville Island; but, unhappily, it barred our road as effectually as if it were so. Penny, with his squadron, failed in passing southward towards Cape Walker; and Lieutenant Cator, in the Intrepid, was equally unsuccessful.

I was much interested in the account of the gallant struggle of the Assistance and Intrepid to this point. They fairly fought their way against the ice, which at every east-going tide was sweeping out of Barrow Strait, and grinding along the shore. It was satisfactory to hear that such risks might be run, and yet neither ships nor crews be lost; and it is but fair to suppose that, if our ships incurred such dangers unscathed, the "sweet cherub" will not a jot the less have watched over the Erebus and Terror. Of course, the "croakers" say, if the floe had pressed a *little* more—if the ship had risen a *little* less—in fact, if Providence had been a *little* less watchful—disasters must have overtaken our ships; but when I hear these "dismal Jemmies" croak, it puts me much in mind of the midshipman, who, describing to his grandmamma the attack on Jean d'Acre, after recounting his prowess and narrow escapes, assured the old lady

that Tom Tough, the boatswain's mate, had asserted with an oath, which put the fact beyond all doubt, that if one of those round-shot from the enemy had struck him, he never would have lived to tell the tale.

From my gallant comrade of the Intrepid, we heard of the search that had been made in Wolstenholme Sound, and along the north shore of Lancaster Sound. In both places numerous traces of Esquimaux had been seen, at Wolstenholme Sound especially. These were numerous and recent, and the Intrepid's people were shocked, on entering the huts, to find many dead bodies, the friends, evidently, of our arctic highlander, Erasmus York, who, as I before said, had shipped as interpreter on board the Assistance. In Wolstenholme Sound, the cairns erected by the North Star were discovered and visited; and, whilst speaking of her, it will be as well for me to note that Captain Penny, on his way up Lancaster Sound, met the North Star off Admiralty Inlet, August 21st, gave Mr Saunders his orders from England, and told him of the number of ships sent out to resume the search for Franklin.

There was one remarkable piece of information, which I noted at the time, and much wondered at; it was derived from Captain Penny, and the officers of the Lady Franklin and Sophia. It appears they crossed Wellington Channel about ten miles higher up than we did; the ice breaking away, it will be remembered, and drifting with the Resolute and Pioneer to the south. From a headland about twelve miles north of Barlow Inlet, Captain Penny observed with astonishment that there were only about ten miles more of ice to the northward

of his vessels, and then, to use his own words, "Water! water! large water! as far as I could see to the N.W." How this water came there? what was beyond it?* were questions which naturally arose; but it was not until the following year that the mystery was explained, and we learnt, what was only then suspected, that those had overshot their mark who wrote this fine channel down as a fiord.

Sept. 11, 1850.—The winter of the arctic regions came on us with its natural characteristics of darkness, gales, frost, and snow-storms. First the wind from the S.E., with a heavy sea, which sent us careering like chargers against the floe edge, and gave all hands a hard night's work to keep the anchors in the firm floe, as the edge rapidly broke up, under the combined effects of sea and shocks from our vessels; then, with a gust or two which threatened to blow the sticks out of our craft, the wind chopped round to the N.W., bringing with it a low temperature, which arctic statistics told us would not, at this season, ever recover itself. Winter quarters, it was evident, alone remained for us.

Happily, the 'Intrepid had discovered a harbour between Cape Hotham and Martyr, on the south side of Cornwallis Island. That place, and Union Bay, in Beechey Island, offered two snug positions, from which searching operations in the spring with travelling-parties could be well and effectually carried out. Search on foot

* In 1852, in a subsequent expedition, I sailed to the head of Wellington Channel, wintered there, and, in company with Captain George Richards, searched the northern shores of the Parry group for several hundred miles. We likewise discovered other lands farther north of Wellington Channel.

now alone remained for us; and earnestly did we pray that our leader's judgment might now decide upon such positions being taken up as would secure all directions—viz., to the south-west, north-west, and, lastly, west—being provided for.

Sept. 13.—Found the four vessels of our squadron, and one of the American brigs, the Advance, under Lieutenant de Haven, all safe at the floe edge. The floe had drifted during the gale considerably towards the shores of North Somerset; and the wedge-shaped island, called Cape Bunny, was distinctly visible: the other of the American brigs had, in the height of the gale, blown adrift and disappeared in the darkness and snow-drift. For her, as well as her Majesty's brigs under Captain Penny, much anxiety was entertained. The American leader of the expedition, I heard, finding farther progress hopeless, intended, in obedience to his orders, to return to New York. This he was the more justified in doing, as no preparation or equipment for travelling-parties had been made by them, and their fittings for wintering in the arctic regions were, compared with ours, very defective. The gallant Yankees, however, could not return without generously offering us provisions, fuel, and stores; and the officers, with a chivalrous feeling worthy of themselves and the cause for which they had come thus far, offered to remain out or exchange with any of "ours" who wanted to return home. We had no room in our vessels to profit by the first offer, nor had enthusiasm yet become sufficiently damped in us to desire to avail ourselves of the proffered exchange; both were declined, but it was said that Lieutenant de Haven was told by

our leader, that if he could land anything for us in Radstock Bay as a depôt, he might render good service.

Letters were therefore hurriedly closed, letter-bags made up, and pleasant recollections of those at home served to cheer us, as, with the temperature at about zero, and with a fresh breeze, we cast off our ships, and worked again to the northward, towards and under the lee of Griffith Island.

Rubbing sides almost with the Advance, who courteously awaited with the Pioneer the sturdy gambols of the Resolute, day was drawing well on before the squadron reached Griffith Island, from the lee of which the missing American schooner was descried to be approaching. Lieutenant de Haven now hoisted his colours for home, and backed his topsail. We did the same; and after a considerable time he bore up with his squadron for New York, doubtless supposing, from no letter being sent, that we had none.

It was far otherwise; and throughout the winter many a growl took place, as a huge pile of undespatched letters would pass before our sight, and blessings of a doubtful nature were showered on our ill-luck; but the fault was not with Lieutenant de Haven.

To the ice, which extended unbroken from Griffith Island to Cape Martyr, we will leave the naval expedition secured, whilst we briefly recount the most striking points in connection with the American expedition that had now left us on its voyage home.

In 1849, Mr Henry Grinnell, a merchant of the United States, actuated by the purest philanthropy, determined to devote a portion of his well-deserved wealth to the

noble purpose of relieving Sir John Franklin, who, it was much to be feared, from the desponding tone of a portion of the English press on Sir James Ross's failure, was likely to be left unsought for in 1850. He therefore, at his sole expense, instantly purchased two vessels, one of 140 tons, the Advance, the other 90 tons, the Rescue, and, having strengthened, provisioned, and equipped them, placed them at the disposal of the American Government, in order that they might be commanded by naval officers, and sail under naval discipline. The American Congress passed the necessary Acts, and Lieutenant E. de Haven, who had seen service in the antarctic seas, took command of the Advance, as the leader of the expedition, and another distinguished officer, Mr Griffin, hoisted his pendant in the Rescue.* On the 23d May 1850, the two vessels sailed from New York, touching at Disco subsequent to ourselves, and, I am sorry to say, they found that my worthy friend Herr Agar had died shortly after my visit; they reached the pack of Melville Bay on the 7th July, and, tightly beset until the 23d, did not reach Cape York until early in August.

On the 7th August the Americans had reached Cape Dudley Digges (at that time our ships were beset off Cape Walker in Melville Bay); thence they stood to the south-west, until they reached the West water.

On the 18th August, when we had a thick fog and almost a calm off Possession Bay, the American squadron was in a severe gale in Lancaster Sound; and on the

* Dr Kane, of subsequent arctic celebrity, as well as a now distinguished Confederate officer, Mr Murdaugh, served in these vessels.

25th August, after visiting Leopold Island, the gallant Americans reached Cape Riley close on the heels of the Assistance and Intrepid.

From that time we have shown that they lost no opportunity of pushing ahead; and if progress depended alone upon skill and intrepidity, our go-ahead friends would have given us a hard tussle for the laurels to be won in the arctic regions.

As a proof of the disinterestedness of their motives, before sailing from America, men as well as officers had signed a bond not to claim, under any circumstances, the £20,000 reward the British Government had offered for Franklin's rescue. America had plucked a rose from our brows; and I gloried in the thought that the men who had so nobly borne themselves, as well as he, the princely merchant who had done his best to assist the widow and orphan to recover those for whom they had so long hoped and wept, were men who spoke our language, and came from one parent stock—a race whose home is on the great waters.

Looking at my rough notes for the following week, I am now puzzled to know what we were hoping for; it must have been a second open season in 1850,—a sanguine disposition, no doubt brought about by a break in the weather, not unlike the Indian summer described by American writers.

Sept. 14.—I went in the Pioneeer with some others, to see if the floe had opened a road to the south of Griffith Island; it had not, nor did it appear likely to do so this season, though there was water seen some fifteen miles or so to the westward.

One day the Assistance and Intrepid started for Assistance Harbour, to winter there, but came back again, for winter had barred the route to the eastward as well as westward. One day after this, or rather many days, we amused ourselves, with powder, blowing open a canal astern of the Resolute, which froze over as quickly as we did it. At other times, some people would go on the top of the island, and see oceans of water, where no ship could possibly get to it; and then others would visit the same spot after a night or two of frost, and, seeing ice where the others had seen water, asserted most confidently that the first were exaggerators!

At any rate, September passed; winter and frost had undoubted dominion over earth and sea; already the slopes of Griffith Island, and the land north of us, were covered with snow; the open water in sight was like a thread, and occasionally disappeared altogether. Fires all day, and candles for long nights, were now in general requisition. Some cross-fire in the different messes was taking place as the individuals suffered more or less from the cold. Plethoric ones, who became red-hot with a run up the ladder, exclaimed against fires, and called zero charming weather; the long and lethargic talked of cold draughts and Sir Hugh Willoughby's fate; the testy and whimsical bemoaned the impure ventilation. A fox or two was occasionally seen scenting around the ships, and a fox-hunt enlivened the floe with men and officers, who chased the unlucky brute as if they had all come to Griffith Island especially for fox-skins; and the last of the feathered tribe, in the shape

of a wounded "burgomaster," shivered, half frozen, as it came for its daily food.

Oct. 2, 1850.—Lieutenant M'Clintock had very properly urged the necessity of sending travelling-parties to forward depots of provisions upon the intended routes of the different parties in 1851: these were this morning despatched,—Lieutenant M'Clintock, with Dr Bradford, carrying out a depot towards Melville Island; Lieutenant Aldrich taking one to Lowther Island, touching at Somerville Island on the way.

Lieutenant Mecham was likewise sent to examine Cornwallis Island, between Assistance Harbour and Cape Martyr, for traces of Franklin.

We, who were left behind, felt not a little anxious about these parties whilst absent, for winter was coming on apace. On the 4th, frost-bites were constantly occurring, and the sun, pale and bleary, afforded more light than warmth. Our preparations for winter were hurried on as expeditiously as possible; and the housing, which, like a tent, formed a complete covering to our upper decks, afforded great comfort and shelter from the cold bleak wind without.

On the 5th, Lieutenant Aldrich returned from his journey; he had not been able to go beyond Somerville Island—the sea between it and Lowther Island being covered with *broken packed ice, half-frozen sludge, and young ice.* On the 7th, Lieutenant Mecham arrived with the intelligence that the Lady Franklin and Sophia were, with the Felix, safe in Assistance Harbour. Captain Penny, after his failure in reaching Cape Walker, had a narrow escape of being beset on the

shores of North Somerset; but by carrying sail through the pack, in the gale of the 11th September, he had happily secured his ships in excellent winter quarters.

Lieutenant Mecham had an adventure on his outward route, which had some interesting features. As he was crossing the entrance of a bay, since named Resolute Bay, he observed a bear amongst some hummocks, evidently breaking the young ice by a sort of jumping motion; and he then saw that he and his party had unconsciously left the old ice, and were travelling over bay ice, which was bending with the weight of the men and sledge. Bruin's sagacity here served the seamen in good stead, and the sledge was expeditiously taken to firmer ice, whilst Mr M. went in chase of the bear. Having mortally wounded it, the brute rushed to seaward, and the sportsman only desisted from the pursuit when he observed the bear fall, and, in doing so, break through the ice, which was too weak to sustain its weight.

Captain Penny, on the following day, sent over his dog-sledge to secure the flesh for his dogs, by which time the unlucky bear was frozen to a hard and solid mass.

Oct. 9.—Lieutenant M'Clintock returned. He had placed his depot forty miles in advance, towards Melville Island; three days' imprisonment by bad weather, in the tents, having foiled his hopes of reaching Bedford Bay in Bathurst Island, which he originally intended to have reached. This party had, likewise, met water to the westward, and there was now but little doubt on our minds that, had the large field of ice which was

blocking the way between Cape Bunny and Griffith Island broken up or drifted away, our squadron would have reached, in all probability, as far as Parry did in '20; but now, the utmost we could hope to attain in the following year was Melville Island, which would be our *goal*, instead of our *starting* point.

Autumn sledge-travelling differs, in some measure, from that of the spring. I will, therefore, give the indulgent reader an account of a short excursion I made for the purpose of connecting the search from where Lieutenant Mecham left the coast, to the point at which Lieutenant M'Clintock had again taken it up; in fact, a bay, facetiously christened by the seamen (who had learned that newly-discovered places were forbidden to be named), "Bay Oh no we never mention it!"

My friend, Mr May of the Resolute, volunteered to accompany me, and on Thusday, the 10th of October, we started with our tent, a runner-sledge, and five days' provisions. The four seamen and we tackled to the drag-ropes, and, with the temperature at 6° above zero, soon walked ourselves into a state of warmth and comfort.

Three hours' sharp dragging brought us to Cape Martyr. Ascending the beach until we had reached a ledge of smooth ice which fringed the coast within the broken line of the tide-marks, we turned to the westward; and commenced searching the beach and neighbouring headlands. I shall not easily efface from my memory the melancholy impression left by this, my first walk on the desolate shores of Cornwallis Island. Like other things, in time the mind became accustomed to it;

and, by habit, one soon learned to see beauties even in the sterility of the north.

Casting off from the sledge, I had taken a short stroll by myself along one of the terraces which, with almost artificial regularity, swept around the base of the higher ground behind, when, to my astonishment, a mass of stone-work, and what at first looked exactly like a cairn, came in view; it required no spur to make me hasten to it, and to discover I was mistaken in supposing it to have been anything constructed so recently as Franklin's visit. The ruin proved to be a conical-shaped building, the apex of which had fallen in. Its circumference, at the base, was about twenty feet, and the height of the remaining wall was five feet six inches. Those who had constructed it appeared well acquainted with the strength of an arched roof to withstand the pressure of the heavy falls of snow of these regions; and much skill and nicety was displayed in the arrangement of the slabs of slaty limestone, in order that the conical form of the building might be preserved throughout.

We removed the stones that had fallen into the building, but found nothing to repay our labour; indeed, from the quantity of moss adhering to the walls, and filling up the interstices of the masses which formed the edifice, I conjectured it was many years since it was constructed, though it would be impossible to guess when it was last inhabited; for, at Ponds Bay, I observed the remains of the native habitations to have the appearance of extreme old age and long abandonment, although, from the fresh seal-blubber *caches*, there was not a doubt of the Esquimaux having been there the previous winter.

A mile beyond this ruin we halted for the night. Four of us (for, in arctic travelling, officer and man are united by the common bond of labour) erected the tent over a space which we had cleared of the larger and rougher pieces of limestone, leaving what was called a soft spot as our castle and bedroom. One man, who dubbed himself cook for the day, with a mate, whose turn it would be to superintend the kitchen on the morrow, proceeded to cook the dinner. The cooking apparatus was a boat's stove, eighteen inches long, and nine inches broad, in which lignum vitæ was used as fuel.

Water having first to be made from ice and snow, and then boiled in the open air, the process was not an expeditious one, and I took my gun and struck inland; whilst Mr May, in an opposite direction, made for a point of land to the westward.

No pen can tell of the unredeemed loneliness of an October evening in this part of the polar world; the monotonous, rounded outline of the adjacent hills, as well as the flat, unmeaning valleys, were of one uniform colour, either deadly white with snow, or striped with brown where too steep for the winter mantle as yet to find a holding ground. You felt pity for the shivering blade of grass, which, at your feet, was already drooping under the cold and icy hand that would press it down to mother earth for nine long months. Talk of "antres vast and deserts idle"—talk of the sadness awakened in the wanderer's bosom by lonely scenes, whether by the cursed waters of Judea or the afflicted lands of Assyria—give me, I say, death in any one of them, with the good sun and a bright heaven to whisper hope, rather than

the solitary horrors of such scenes as these. The very wind scorned courtesy to such a repulsive landscape, and as the stones, before the blast, rattled down the slope of a ravine, it only recalled dead men's bones and motion in a catacomb. A truce, however, to such thoughts. May's merry recognition breaks the stillness of the frosty air. He has been to the point, and finds it an island. He says—and I vow he means what he says—that May Island is a beautiful spot! it has grass and moss upon it, and traces of game; next year he intends to bag many a hare there. Sanguine feelings are infectious; I forget my own impressions, adopt his rosy ones, and we walk back to our tent, guided by the smoke, plotting plans for shooting excursions in 1851!

"The pemmican is all ready, sir," reports our Soyer. In troth, appetite need wait on one, for the greasy compound would pall on moderate taste or hunger. Tradition said that it was composed of the best rump-steaks and suet, and cost 1s. 6d. per pound. To our then untutored tastes it seemed composed of broken-down horses and Russian tallow. If not sweet in savour it was strong in nourishment, and after six table-spoonfuls we cried, Hold! enough! But there came a day when we sat hungry and lean, longing for this coarse mess, and eating a pound of it with avidity, and declaring it to be delicious!

Frozen pork, which had been boiled on board the ship, was quite a treat, and decidedly better than cold thawed pork could have been. This, with plenty of biscuit and a "jolly hot" basin of tea, and, as one of the seamen observed, "an invitation to Windsor would

have been declined." The meal done, the tent was carefully swept out, the last sedulous arrangement of the pebbles, termed "picking the feathers," was made, and then a waterproof sheet spread to prevent our warm bodies, during the night, melting the frozen ground and wetting us through. Then every man seized his blanket bag, and popped thereinto his legs and body, in order that the operation of undressing might be decently performed, and placed jacket and wet boots carefully for a pillow. Lastly, the wolf-skin robes—Oh, contractor of furs! may you be haunted by the aroma of the said robes for your lifetime!—brought along both over and under the party, and all lie down alternately, head and feet in a row, across the tent. Pipes are lighted, the evening's glass of grog served out; and whilst the cook is washing up, and preparing his things ready for the morning meal, as well as securing the food on the sledge from foxes or a hungry bear, many a tough yarn is told or joke made. The cook reports all right, comes in, hooks up the door, tucks in the end of the fur robe, and seven jolly mortals, with a brown-holland tent over their heads and a winter's gale without, try to nestle their sides amongst the softest stones, and soon drop into such a sleep as those only enjoy who drag a sledge all day, with the temperature 30° below freezing-point.

In the morning, at seven o'clock, we rolled up our beds, or rather sleeping-bags, stowed the sledge, drank boiling hot chocolate, and gnawed cheerily at frozen pork and biscuit. The weather beautiful, calm, and very cold, below zero, we started, skirting round the bay. By noon a gale sprang up, sending a body of icy spiculæ

against our faces, causing both pain and annoyance. Two mock suns for the first time were seen to-day. At noon we sat down under the lee of our sledge, and partook of a mouthful of grog and biscuit, and again marched rapidly towards Cape No Name. By the evening we had accomplished fourteen miles, the entire circuit of the bay, without observing any trace of Franklin having visited the neighbourhood; and as frost-bites began to attack our faces, we erected our tent as expeditiously as possible, and in it took shelter from the wind and cold. The pungent smoke of the lignum vitæ kept us weeping as long as the cooking went on; and between the annoyance of it, the cold, and fatigue, we all dropped off to sleep, indifferent to a falling temperature, prowling bears, or a violent gale, which threatened to blow us from the beach on which we had pitched our fluttering tent.

When our work was done we struck homeward for the squadron, and reached it the same evening, the said 12th of October being the last autumnal travelling of our squadron.

During the following week the temperature rallied a little, and the weather was generally finer; our preparations for wintering were nearly completed, and the poor sickly sun barely for two hours a-day rose above the heights of Griffith Island.

To our great joy, on the 17th of October, Captain Penny came over from Assistance Harbour. He had happily decided on taking up the route of Wellington Channel; and an understanding was come to, that his squadron should carry out the search next spring on

that direction, whilst ours accomplished the farthest possible distance towards Melville Island, and from Cape Walker to the south-west.

Captain P. expressed it as his opinion that the Americans had not escaped out of Barrow Strait, in consequence of a sudden gale springing up from the southward, shortly after they had passed his winter quarters. This supposition we of course afterwards found to be true, although at the time we all used to speak of the Americans as being safe and snug in New York, instead of drifting about in the ice within a few miles of us, as was really the case.

With Penny's return to his vessels may be said to have closed all the active operations of the year 1850. Our upper decks were now covered in; stoves and warming apparatus set at work; boats secured on the ice; all the lumber taken off the upper decks, to clear them for exercise in bad weather; masts and yards made as snug as possible; rows of posts placed to show the road in the darkness and snow-storms from ship to ship; holes cut through the ice into the sea, to secure a ready supply of water in the event of fire; arrangements made to insure cleanliness of ships and crews, and a winter routine entered upon, which those curious in such matters may find fully detailed in Parry's 'First Voyage,' or Ross's 'Four Years in Boothia.'

The building of snow-walls, posts, and houses, was at first a source of amusement to the men, and gave them a great field in which to exercise their skill and ingenuity. People at home would, I think, have been delighted to see the pretty and tasteful things cut out of

snow; obelisks, sphinxes, vases, cannon, and, lastly, a stately Britannia, looking to the westward, enlivened the floe, and gave voluntary occupation to the crews of the vessels. These, however, only served for a while; and as the arctic night of months closed in, every one's wits were exerted to the utmost to invent occupation and entertainment for our little community.

On November the 8th, two officers ascended the heights of Griffith Island, and at noontide caught the last glimpse of the sun, as it happened to be thrown up by refraction, though in reality it was seventeen minutes below our horizon. We were now fairly about to undergo the darkness of an arctic winter, in 74½° of north latitude; and light-hearted and confident as we felt in our resources, one could not but feel, looking upon the dreary scene which spread around us on every side, how much our lives were in His hands who tempers the wind to the shorn lamb; and wanting must he have been in feeling who did not offer up a heartfelt prayer that returning day and returning summer might find him able and fit to undergo the hardship and fatigue of journeys on foot, to seek for his long-lost fellow-seamen. We should have been wanting in all the better feelings of our nature not at such a season to have drawn nearer to that Almighty Protector who had carried us so far in the hollow of His hand, and upon whose mercy our preservation still depended; and perhaps we were all then better men than we had been since we quitted our homes as boys, and had launched on the troubled tide of a sailor's life. But at any rate such feelings were only right and wholesome to men circumstanced as we were.

There was no maudlin whine about any of us: we looked our trials straight in the face, and merely turned from them now and then to ask God's mercy and assistance in battling with them. Nothing great or good was ever achieved in this world in any other spirit, and surely of all men the arctic navigator surrounded with such wonders should be the last to forget his Creator. There was, too, another and perhaps equally hallowed feeling which no doubt had its influence with many, and directed our thoughts heavenward—it was the knowledge that others very dear to us, away in Old England, were offering earnest prayers for our safety and welfare, and that there in that heaven we could meet in spirit and in faith. Nay, it was not alone love for our own kith and kin which reminded us of where our sure and certain hope should rest, but the feeling that we carried with us the sympathies of all the great and good of our countrymen and countrywomen. They had in a thousand ways evinced it whilst we were fitting out for our voyage, and far and wide came tokens of regard, or such tender little proofs as the following, the writer of which is still a stranger to me, though I observed it bore an Irish postmark:—

RECEIVED IN THE ARCTIC REGIONS BY S. OSBORN, H.M.S. PIONEER.

"Go forth upon your noble work,
Ye earnest men and brave!
Go, seek the friends long lost, long loved,
And bring them o'er the wave.

"God shield ye on the icy deep,
And be for aye your stay;
God watch above the gallant bark
That bears ye on your way.

"And when amidst dark frozen seas,
If struggling with despair,
Cheer ye with thought of those at home,
Who kneel for you in prayer.

"Bethink ye of the God of might,
And lift your eyes above
To Him who sits enthroned in light,
A matchless God of Love!

"But chief upon each Sabbath-day,
At holy hour of prayer,
Bow ye the head and bend the knee,
And join your brethren there,

"Where, far apart o'er land or sea,
All may at once draw nigh
The great white throne of Him who rules—
Our Father—upon high!

K. W.

"To all the brave men now periling their lives in the endeavour to rescue their countrymen from the frozen deep, these (unworthy) lines are affectionately addressed. For as the meanest weed that grows in the midst of desert sands, if it but hold one drop of heaven's dew, may be made by the Great Artificer, in the wondrous economy of His love, the means of refreshment to some object of His care, so it may chance that *even these* lines, so worthless in themselves, yet blest by *Him*, may convey some feeling of pleasure—some slight cheer—to those who now so nobly toil and suffer in the cause of their long-lost countrymen, if only by showing how the mighty

Father can fill with sympathy hearts the most distant and unknown; and may prove that the arctic voyagers are remembered in prayer before God by those whose faces they have never seen on earth."

Private theatricals, a casino, and a musical society, two arctic newspapers, one of them an illustrated one, evening school upon the voluntary principle, as well as instructive lectures by some of the officers, gave no one an excuse for being idle. The officers and men entered as heartily into these healthy amusements as they had rivalled each other during the past season in energetic labour. Each imposed on himself duties connected with the different departments; one was scene-painter, and under his talented pencil the canvass glowed with pictures one almost grieved to see thus employed. Decorators and statuaries produced effects which, with such limited means, were really astounding; vocalists and musicians practised and persevered until an instrumental band and glee-club were formed, to our general delight; officers and men sang who never sang before, and maybe, except under similar circumstances, will never sing again. Maskers had to construct their own masks and sew their own dresses, the naval stores serving in lieu of a supply from the milliners; and, with wonderful ingenuity, a fancy dress ball was got up, which, in variety and tastefulness of costume, would have borne comparison with any in Europe.

Here editors floundered through a leader, exhibiting French ingenuity in saying their say without bringing themselves within the grasp of the censors; there sailor

contributors, whose hands were more accustomed to the tar-brush than the pen, turned flowing sentences by the aid of old miscellanies and well-thumbed dictionaries. On wooden stools, leaning over long tables, might be seen a row of serious and anxious faces, which put one in mind of the days of cane and birch—an arctic school. Tough old marines curving "pothooks and hangers," as if their very lives depended on their performances, with an occasional burst of petulance, such as, "D—— the pen, it won't write! I beg pardon, sir; this 'ere pen will splutter!" Or some big-whiskered top-man, with slate in hand, reciting his multiplication-table, and grinning at approval; whilst a "scholar," as the cleverest were termed, gave the instructor occasionally a hard task to preserve his learned superiority.

In an adjoining place an observer might nightly notice a tier of attentive, upturned faces, listening like children to some nursery tale. It was the first-lieutenant of the Resolute, my much-loved friend Aldrich. He was telling them of the deeds of their forefathers in these regions. Parry's glorious pages open by his side, he told those stern men with tender hearts, of the sufferings, the enterprise, the courage, and the reward of imperishable renown exhibited and won by others. The glistening eye and compressed lip showed how the good seed was taking root in the listeners around, and every evening saw that sailor audience gather around him whom they knew to be the "gallant and true," to share in his feelings and borrow from his enthusiasm.

For some time after the sun had ceased to visit our heavens, the southern side of the horizon, for a few hours

about noon, was strongly illumined, the sky being shaded from deep and rosy red through all the most delicate tints of pink and blue, until, in the north, a bluish-black scowled angrily over the pale mountains, which, in widowed loneliness, had drawn their cowls of snow around, and, uncheered by the roseate kiss of the bridegroom sun, seemed to mourn over the silence and darkness at their feet.

Such was a fine day in November, and through the grey twilight the dark forms of our people, as they traversed the floe, or scaled the cliffs of Griffith Island, or, maybe, occasionally hunted a bear, completed the scene.

Charmed as we were with the evanescent colouring of our noonday sky, it was in loveliness far surpassed by the exceeding beauty of arctic midnight when the moon was visible. Daylight but served to show the bleakness of frozen sea and land; but a full silvery moon, wheeling around the zenith for several days and nights, threw a poetry over everything, which reached and glowed in the heart, in spite of intense frost and biting breeze. At such a time we were wont to pull on our warm jackets and sealskin caps, and, striding out upon the floe, enjoy to the utmost the elasticity of health and spirits with which we were blest under so bracing a climate. There, with one's friend, the mutual recognition of nature's beauties, and congratulations at being there to witness it, richly rewarded us for our isolation from the world of our fellow-men; and general enthusiasm had its full sway as, from the heights of Griffith Island, we looked down on our squadron, whose masts alone pierced the broad white expanse over Barrow Strait, and threw

long shadows across the floe. The noble mission for which they had been sent into the north was ever present to us, and away instinctively flew our thoughts to our gallant friends in the Erebus and Terror. Thus alternately elated and saddened, we enjoyed, with earnest feelings, the wondrous scene around us.

Imagine yourself, reader, on the heights of Griffith Island, on the edge of a lofty table-land, which, dipping suddenly at your feet, sloped again to a sea of ice at a distance of some 500 feet below: picture a vast plain of ice and snow, diversified by tiers of broken-up ice and snow wreaths, which, glistening on the one side, reflected back the moonlight with an exceeding brilliancy, whilst the strong shadow on the farther side of the masses threw them out in strong relief: four lone barks, atoms in the extensive landscape, and beyond them, on the horizon, sweeping in many a bay, valley, and headland, the ghostly coast of Cornwallis Island, now bursting upon the eye in startling distinctness, then receding into shadow and gloom, and anon diversified with flickering shades, like an autumnal landscape in our own dear land, as the fleecy clouds sailed slowly across the moon; that moon, so sharp, so clear, the while riding through a heaven of deepest blue, richly illuminated by the constellations of the northern hemisphere. As these wheeled around the polar star like armies in review, say if the North has not then charms of its own.

If you still doubt it, let us descend the adjacent ravine, formed as if some giant hand had rent the firm cliff from crown to basement. Stand we now at its upper entrance: didst ever see a sight more wildly beautiful?—the grim

and frowning buttresses on either hand, too steep for even the snowflake to rest upon. Mark how, over their brows, pigmy glaciers topple with graceful curve, or droop in many an icy wreath and spray, threatening us with destruction as we slide down the sharp declivity. Note how, with many a graceful curve, the gorge winds down to the frozen sea, a glimpse of which spreads in strong moonlight before the lower entrance. Observe how the snow, which by wintry gales has been swept into the ravine, has hardened into masses, resembling nought so much as a fierce rapid suddenly congealed; and then look overhead to a deep blue sky, spangled with a million spheres. If thou couldst have seen this, and much more than pen or tongue can tell, and not admire it, then, I say, "God help thee! thou hast reason to be sad."

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As late as the 18th of November, water, in a broad lane, was seen to the S.E. from the extreme of Griffith Island, showing the pack to be in motion in Barrow Strait, a belief we otherwise arrived at from the frequent appearance of a water sky in the same direction, especially after spring-tides or strong N.W. gales. A few bears, perhaps eight in all, visited our ships during the closing period of 1850, proving that they did not hibernate immediately the sun disappeared; indeed, so long as there was water near us, they would find seal, their usual, perhaps their only food. Apart from the appearance of water in our immediate neighbourhood, we were convinced that Lancaster Sound was still open, from the sudden rise of the temperature of the air whenever the wind drew to that quarter; and what was more extraordinary still, when-

ever the wind was from the northward, a black vapour, a certain indication of water, was seen to be rolling past Cape Hotham out of Wellington Channel. Could that have been open so long after the sea in our neighbourhood was closed? we often asked ourselves.*

However, to return to the bears; whenever an unlucky brute was seen, the severe competition as to who should possess his skin, entailed no small risk of life upon the hunters, as well as the proprietor of the coveted prize; and crossing the line of fire was recklessly performed, in a manner to have shocked an "Excellent" gunner or a Woolwich artilleryman. Discretion was the better part of ursine valour, and one brute was alone bagged, although a good many were very much frightened; the frequent chases and constant failures giving rise to much quizzing on the part of the sportsmen, and learned dissertations by our Nimrods upon the rules to be observed in bear-shooting. As instances of what risks the community ran whilst the furor for skins was at its height, unconscious mortals who had got on a hummock to see around were mistaken in the twilight for bears, and stood fire from a rifle, which, happily for them, on this occasion missed its mark; and on another day, a respectable individual, trotting among the snow-ridges for his daily exercise, was horrified to see on a piece of canvass, in large letters, "Beware of spring-guns!" Picture to one's self the person's feelings. How was he to escape? The next tread of his foot, and, maybe, off into his body might be dis-

* In after years this mystery was solved. It was simply the strong tides in Wellington Channel which kept holes of water open in the otherwise frozen sea.

charged the murderous barrel secreted for a bear. Fate decreed otherwise; the alarmed seaman escaped, and the spring-gun was banished to some lonely ravine, from which the proprietor daily anticipated a dead bear, and I, a dead shipmate—some of whom, pining for forlorn damsels at home, were led to sentimentalise in retired places.

My captain of the forecastle, whose sporting propensities I have elsewhere noted, nigh cured me of a momentary mania for trophies of the chase. A large bear and cub, after coming towards the Pioneer, for some time halted, and were fired at by three officers with guns. Of the three barrels only one went off, wounding the cub, which, with its mother, made for Griffith Island. I chased, followed by some of the men, the foremost of whom was my ancient mariner, who kept close to my heels, urging me on by declaring we were fast catching the brutes. We decidedly had done so. By the time I reached the island both bears were within shot, climbing up with cat-like agility the steep face of the cliffs: again and again I failed to get my gun off; and as the she-bear looked at one time inclined to come down and see who the bipeds were that had chased her, I looked round at my supporters, who were vehemently exclaiming that "we should have her in a minute!" They consisted of old Abbott, armed with a snow-knife, and some men who followed because they saw others doing so. Now a snow-knife consists of nothing more than a piece of old iron beaten out on an anvil so as to cut snow, having an edge as to which, when I anxiously asked if it was sharp, I was figuratively told, "The owner, John Abbott, could have ridden to the devil upon it without injury to his person."

Yet with this, I verily believe, the old seaman would have entered the lists against the teeth and talons of Mistress Bruin. I objected, however, and allowed her to escape with becoming thankfulness.

Christmas day was of course not forgotten, and our best, though humble fare was displayed in each of the vessels. Hospitality and good-fellowship, however, were not confined to this day alone; and had not the bond of friendship which knit the officers and men of the squadron together taught them the necessity for sharing the little they had, the open-handed liberality of our hospitable leader, Captain Horatio Austin, would have done so. At his table, petty differences, professional heart-burnings, and quarterdeck etiquette were forgotten and laid aside. A liberal and pleasant host made merry guests; and amongst the many ways in which we strove to beguile the winters of 1850–51, none have more agreeable recollections than his dinner-parties.

It may not here be out of place to describe the ordinary clothing worn at Christmas time by officers and men, the temperature ranging often as low as 35° below zero of Fahr., with strong gales.

Clothing when indoors.

1 Flannel shirt with sleeves.
1 Cotton ditto.
1 Waistcoat with sleeves, lined with flannel.
1 Pair drawers, flannel.
1 Pair trousers, box-cloth, lined with flannel.
1 Pair thick stockings.
1 Do. thin ditto.
1 Horse-hair sole.
1 Pair carpet boots.

Additional for walking.

Box-cloth pea-jacket.
Welsh wig.
Sealskin cap.
Beaver-skin mitts.
Shawl or comfortable.
Men with tender faces required a cloth face-cover in the wind.

January 1851.—That we were all paler, was perceptible to every one; but only a few had lost flesh. A very little exercise was found to tire us very soon, and appetites were generally on the decrease. For four hours a-day men and officers made a point of facing the external air, let the temperature be what it would, and this rule was carefully adhered to, until the return of the sun naturally induced us to lengthen our excursions. On three occasions only was the weather too severe for communication between the vessels; and the first of these occurred in the close of December and commencement of January. To show one's face outboard was then an impossibility; the gale swept before it a body of snow higher than our trucks, and hid everything a few yards off from sight. The Resolute, three hundred yards off, was invisible, and the accumulation of snow upon our housing threatened to burst it in. The floe seemed to tremble as the gale shrieked over its surface, and tore up the old snow-drifts and deposited them afresh. A wilder scene man never saw: it was worthy of the arctic regions, and a fit requiem for the departing year.

After one of these wintry hurricanes, walking on the floe was a work of much difficulty, in consequence of the irregular surface it presented to the foot. The snow-ridges, called *Sastrugi* by the Russians, ran (where unobstructed by obstacles which caused a counter current) in parallel lines, waving and winding together, and so close and hard on the edges, that the foot, huge and clumsy as it was with warm clothing and thick soles, slipped about most helplessly; and we therefore had to wait until a change of wind had, by a cross drift, filled

up the ridges thus formed, before we took long walks. On the ice-field between the vessels parties were usually employed throughout the winter mending the roads.

With one portion of the phenomena of the Arctic Sea we were particularly disappointed—and this was the aurora. The colours in all cases were vastly inferior to those seen by us in latitudes considerably to the south—in the Orkneys for instance, or the northern parts of Scotland. A pale golden or straw colour was here the prevailing hue, and the most striking part of it was its apparent proximity to the earth. Once or twice the auroral coruscations accompanied a moon in its last quarter, and generally previous to bad weather. On one occasion, in Christmas week, the light played about the edge of a low vapour which hung at a very small altitude over us: it never on this occasion lit up the whole under surface of the said clouds, but formed a series of concentric circles of light, with dark spaces between, which waved, glistened, and vanished, like moonlight upon a heaving but unbroken sea.

At other times a stream of the same coloured vapour would span the heavens through the zenith, and from it would shoot sprays of pale orange colour for many hours, and then the mysterious light would again as suddenly vanish.

Clouds may have been said to have absented themselves from our sky for at least two months of the winter; the heavens, the stars, and moon, were often obscured, but it invariably appeared to be from snow-drift rather than from a cloudy sky. Snow fell incessantly, even on the clearest day, consisting of minute spiculæ, hardly per-

ceptible to the eye, but which accumulated rapidly, and soon covered anything left in the open air for a few minutes. With returning daylight, and the promise of the sun, clouds again dotted the southern heavens, and mottled with beautiful mackerel skies the blue dome above us.

The immense quantity of snow which in a gale is kept suspended in the air by the action of the wind, and is termed drift, quite astounded us; and on two occasions, with north-westerly gales, we had a good opportunity of noting its accumulation.* The Pioneer and Intrepid lay across the wind, and the counter-current caused a larger deposition around us than elsewhere. On the first occasion, after the wind subsided, we found a snow-wreath along the weather side of the vessel for a length of one hundred and eighty feet, about eleven feet deep in the deepest part, and sloping gradually away for one hundred yards. After weighing a cubic foot of the snow, I calculated that, at the lowest computation, the mass thus deposited in twenty-four hours was not less than four hundred tons in weight! How the floe bore the pressure seemed unaccountable to me; but it did around the Pioneer, although that near the Intrepid broke down, and the water flowed up above the snow, forming it rapidly into ice.

* The quantity of snow which fell and drifted upon us in the neighbourhood of Griffith Island, when the gales blew with severity from the north or north-west, led us all to suspect the existence of water in some more northern latitude—the sanguine talked of open polar seas; but subsequent explorations by ourselves in that direction proved that strong tides and water-holes in Wellington Channel sufficiently accounted for the existence of so much moisture in the air when gales were blowing from that quarter towards Barrow Strait.

Much later in the winter—in the month of March—a succession of furious snow-storms quite smothered us; the drift piled up as high as the top of the winter housing, which was fifteen feet above the deck, and then blew over to leeward, filling up on that side likewise; whilst we, unable to face the storm without, could only prevent the housing from being broken in by placing props of planks and spars to support the superincumbent weight. We had actually to dig our way out of the vessel; and I know not how we should have freed the poor smothered craft had not nature assisted us by the breaking down of the floe. This at first threatened to injure and strain the Pioneer, for, firmly held as she was all round, the vessel was immersed some two feet deeper than she ought to have been by the subsiding ice. We set to work, however, to try and liberate her, when one night a series of loud reports awakened me, and the quartermaster at the same time ran down to say, in his quaint phraseology, that "she was a-going off!" a fact of which there was no doubt, as, with sudden surges, the Pioneer overcame the hold the floe had taken of her poor sides, and after some struggles floated again at her true waterline, whilst the mountain of snow around us had sunk to the level of the floe. This first formed enormously thick ice; but in time, by the action of the under-currents of water, reduced itself to the ordinary thickness of the adjoining floe.

Before we enter upon the subject of returning spring, and the new occupations and excitement which it called forth, let me try to convey an idea of a winter's day spent in total darkness on board a ship in 74½° north latitude.

The upper deck was covered, from stem to stern-post, with a thick felt awning, fifteen feet high in the centre, and carefully secured down to the gunwale all round the ship. There were two doors with porches, so that the lee one could always be used. The decks were carefully cleared for exercise, and lighted sparsely with common fat-lamps with canvass wicks—pork fat, bear's grease, or whale blubber being indiscriminately used, but with the greatest economy. The lower deck and cabins were of course constantly lighted with candles and oil-lamps; and the ladder-ways were only left open for ingress or egress, but carefully secured with double doors, well weighted, to close immediately upon persons going up or down. The sides and upper deck of the ship were carefully covered over with snow as a non-conductor, and no apertures left open in bull's-eyes or skylights, except such as were thoroughly watched and under control for ventilating purposes. Let us suppose that the breakfast-time has arrived, about 8 A.M. The hammocks have been carefully stowed away, the necessary ablutions performed, and the savoury incense of her Majesty's allowance of chocolate rises in a vapour, fore and aft, from all the mess-tables. A pint of the invigorating beverage, and a biscuit and a half, constitutes the meal; and from the jokes and merriment heard on all sides, you can vouch it to have been a satisfactory one. This over, we observe a general pulling-on of warm clothing, and the major portion of the officers and men proceed on deck, the rest clean and clear up between decks, search for and remove lumps of ice formed in cold corners during the night by the condensation of the breath of the sleeping crew, and

then they arrange for the next meal of noonday. At a proper time a general muster takes place, called Divisions, followed by prayers. Officers carefully inspect the men and every part of the ship, to see that the former were properly clad, and the latter properly clean, and then all hands disperse for a couple of hours of light duty—duties which the wisdom of Captain Austin carefully confines to taking gentle exercise, supplying ourselves with pure snow to melt into water for drinking purposes, and keeping a hole open through the floe so as to obtain sea-water in case of a fire on board the ships. Exercise at this severe and monotonous season was really a trying operation, but imperatively necessary, as we all learnt by experience. Knots of two or three persons would dash out, with their faces covered, and try a stretch to Griffith Island; but in general a good walk under the shelter of our ships was preferred, the moon and the stars lighting our mid-day exercise.

A little before dinner the excursionists proceeded to prepare for that meal, by scraping the ice off their beards, whiskers, and eyebrows, sweeping hoar-frost off their clothing, and taking off outdoor garments. The crew dined at noon: the usual fare of the seaman having been much improved by a liberal supply of preserved meats, soups, and vegetables of excellent quality—these, together with salt pork and beef, enabled Jack, with his usual ingenuity, to ring a series of changes which would have amused a longshore cook. The officers dined about 2 P.M. Their food differed little from that of the crew, for of course live stock could not be kept in such a climate. A little afternoon exercise was then taken, and

the evening meal of tea partaken of. If it was school night, the voluntary pupils went to their tasks, the masters to their posts—reading men producing their books, writing men their desks; artists painted by candle-light; and cards, chess, or draughts, combined with conversation, and an evening's glass of grog, and a cigar or pipe, served to bring round bed-time again.

Monotony was our enemy, and to kill time our endeavour. Of hardship we could not, and did not, complain; for all we underwent in winter quarters in the shape of cold, hunger, or danger, was voluntary. Monotony, as I again repeat, was the only disagreeable part of our wintering at Griffith Island. Some men amongst us seemed in their temperament to be much better able to endure this monotony than others; and others who had no source of amusement—such as reading, writing, or drawing—were much to be pitied. Nothing struck one more than the strong tendency to talk of home and England; for a while it became quite a disease. We, for the most part, spoke as if all the most affectionate husbands, dutiful sons, and attached brothers, had found their way into the arctic expeditions. From these maudlins, to which the most strong-minded occasionally gave way, we gladly sought refuge in amusements—such as theatres and balls. To give an idea of the zest with which all entered into these gaieties, I will recount a list of the characters assumed by the officers at the first fancy dress ball.

Capt. AUSTIN,	*Old Chairs to mend.*
,, OMMANNEY,	*Mayor of Griffith Island.*
Lieut. ALDRICH,	*Fancy Dress.*
,, CATOR,	*Old English Gentleman.*
,, M'CLINTOCK,	*Blue Demon.*
,, OSBORN,	*Black Domino.*
,, BROWNE,	*Red Devil.*
,, MECHAM,	*Blue and White Domino.*
Dr DONNET,	*A Lady, then a Friar.*
,, BRADFORD,	*A Capuchin.*
Mr KING,	*Jockey.*
,, PEARSE,	*Smuggler.*
,, MAY,	*Roman Soldier.*
,, HAMILTON,	*A Spinster.*
,, EDE,	*Spanish Dancing-girl.*
,, MARKHAM,	*As Allegory.*
,, CHEYNE,	*Miss Maria.*
,, M'DOUGAL,	*Vivandiere.*
,, LEWIS,	*Farmer Wapstraw.*
,, ALLARD,	*Mahomet Ali.*
,, WEBB,	*Bedouin Arab.*
,, HARWOOD,	*Miss Tabitha Flick.*
,, ALLEN,	*Greenwich Pensioner.*
,, BROOMAN,	*Punch.*
,, KRABBE,	*Sir Charles Grandison.*
,, RICHARDS,	*A Scot.*
Dr WARD,	*A Beadle.*

Whilst pirates, Turks, gypsies, and ghosts, without number, checkered the ball-room.

These were our amusements; but the main object of our coming to the North was kept constantly in view, and nothing that labour or ingenuity could devise towards the successful accomplishment of our mission was wanting.

Some turned their attention to obtaining information upon all that related to travelling in frozen regions; others plodded through many a volume for meteorological information upon which to arrange a safe period of

departure for the travellers in the spring; some tried to found a reasonable theory as to the geography of the unexplored regions around us; whilst a portion more actively employed themselves in bringing into action divers means of communicating with our missing countrymen which had been supplied to us in England.

Rockets, in the calm evenings of early winter, were fired with good effect; and signals were several times exchanged, both in the autumn and spring, between Assistance Harbour and our squadron by the aid of these useful projectiles, although the distance was twenty miles.

The balloons, however, as a more novel attempt for distant signalising, or rather intercommunication, were a subject of deep interest. The plan was simple and ingenious; the merit of the idea, as applicable to the relief of Sir John Franklin, by communicating to him intelligence of the position of the searching parties, being due to Mr Shepperd, C.E. It was as follows: A balloon of oiled silk, capable of raising about a pound weight when inflated, was filled with hydrogen evolved from a strong cask, fitted with a valve, into which, when required for the purpose, a certain quantity of zinc filings and sulphuric acid was introduced. To the base of the balloon, when inflated, a piece of slow match five feet long was attached, its lower end being lighted. Along this match, at certain intervals, pieces of coloured paper and silk were secured with thread, and on them the information as to our position and intended lines of search were printed. The balloon, when liberated, sailed rapidly along, rising withal, and as the match burnt the

papers were gradually detached, and, falling, spread themselves on the snow, where their glaring colours would soon attract notice, should they happily fall near the poor fellows in the Erebus and Terror.

Every care was taken to despatch these balloons with winds from the southward and south-east, so that the papers might be distributed to the north and north-west, and westward. Fire-balloons, of which there were a few, were likewise despatched; but the impression in my own mind is, that the majority of the balloons despatched by us, after rising to some height, were carried by counter-currents—always the most prevalent ones at the cold season of the year—to the southward and south-west. On two occasions I distinctly saw the balloons, when started with S.E. winds, pass for a while to the N.W., and then, at a great altitude, alter course under the influence of a contrary current, and pass as rapidly to the S.E., in the teeth of the light airs we had on the floe.

The farthest distance from the point of departure at which any of these papers were found, as far as I know, appears to have been about fifty miles. The Assistance despatched some from near Barlow Inlet, which were picked up on the opposite side of Wellington Channel, north of Port Innis. Neither this, however, nor our non-discovery of any papers during our travelling in 1851, can be adduced as a proof against their possible utility and success; and the balloons may still be considered a most useful auxiliary.

Next, as a means of communication, came carrier pigeons. When first proposed, in 1850, many laughed at

the idea of a bird doing any service in such a cause; and, maybe, might have laughed yet, had not a carrier pigeon, despatched by Captain Sir John Ross from his winter quarters in 1850, actually reached its home, near Ayr, in Scotland, in five days. In our expedition none of these birds had been taken; but on board the Felix Sir John Ross had a couple of brace. I plead guilty myself to having joined in the laugh at the poor creatures, when, with feathers in a half-moulted state, I heard it proposed to despatch them from Beechey Island, in 74° N. and 92° W., to the meridian of Greenwich and 56° N. latitude, even though they were slung to a balloon for a part of the journey. At any rate it was done, I think, on the 5th October 1850, from Assistance Harbour. Two birds, duly freighted with intelligence, and notes from the married men, were put in a basket, which was attached to a balloon in such a manner that, after combustion of a certain quantity of match, the carrier pigeons would be launched into the air to commence their flight. The idea was that they would fetch some of the whaling vessels about the mouth of Hudson Strait—at least so I heard. The wind was then blowing fresh from the north-west, and the temperature below zero.

When we in the squadron off Griffith Island heard of the departure of the mail, the opinion prevalent was that the birds would be frozen to death. We were mistaken; for in about 120 hours one of these birds, as verified by the lady to whom it had originally belonged, reached her house, and flew to the nest in which it had been hatched in the pigeon-house. It had, however, by some means or other shaken itself clear of the packet intrusted to its

charge. This marvellous flight of 3000 miles is the longest on record; but of course we are unable to say for what portion of the distance the bird was carried by the balloon, and when or where liberated—that depending upon the strength and direction of the gale in which the balloon was carried along.*

Kites, which a kind friend had supplied me with as a tractile power to assist us in dragging sledges, as well as a means of signalising between parties, afforded much interest; and the success of our experiments in applying them to dragging weights was so great, that all those I was able to supply gladly provided themselves with so useful an auxiliary to foot travellers. Experience, however, taught us how impossible it was to command a fair wind, without which they were useless weight, and in severe weather there was some danger, when handling or coiling up the lines, of having to expose the hands and being frost-bitten.

My attempts failed to despatch the kites with a weight attached sufficient to keep a strain on the string, and so keep the kite aloft, whilst at the same time it was enabled to proceed through the air in any direction I chose; for, as may be conceived, a little too much weight made the kite a fixture, whilst a little too little, or a sudden flaw of wind, would topple the kite over and bring it to the earth. As a means of signalising between ships when stationary, the flying of kites of different colours, sizes, or numbers, attached one to the other, would, I am

* I give this anecdote as it occurred at the time. The proof of the bird having arrived rests with a lady, a friend of the late Admiral Sir John Ross.

sure, in a clear atmosphere, be found wonderfully efficacious.

Lastly, we carried out, more I believe from amusement than from any idea of being useful, a plan which had suggested itself to the people of Sir James Ross's expedition when wintering in Leopold Harbour in 1848-49, that of enclosing information in collars secured to the necks of the arctic foxes caught in traps, which were then liberated. Several animals thus intrusted with despatches or records were liberated by different ships; but, as the truth must be told, I fear in many cases the next night saw the poor "postman," as Jack facetiously termed him, in another trap, out of which he would be taken, killed, the skin taken off and packed away, to ornament, at some future day, the neck of some fair Dulcinea. As a "sub," I was admitted into this mystery, otherwise I, with my chief, might have accounted for the disappearance of the collared foxes by believing them busy on their honourable mission. In order that the crime of killing "the postman" may be recognised in its true light, it is but fair that I should say, that the brutes, having once partaken of the good cheer on board or around the ships, seldom seemed satisfied with the mere empty honours of a copper collar, and returned to be caught over and over again. Strict laws were laid down for their safety, such as an edict that no fox taken alive in a trap was to be killed. Of course no fox was after this taken alive; they were all unaccountably dead, unless it was some fortunate wight whose brush and coat were worthless. In such case he lived to drag about a quantity of information in a copper collar for the rest of his days,

much to his discomfort and the astonishment of his brother foxes.

The departure of a postman was a scene of no small merriment: all hands, from the captain to the cook, were out to chase the fox, who, half frightened out of its wits, seemed to doubt which way to run; whilst loud shouts and roars of laughter, breaking the cold frosty air, were heard from ship to ship, as the fox-hunters swelled in numbers from all sides; and those that could not run mounted some neighbouring hummock of ice, and gave a view-halloo, which said far more for robust health than for tuneful melody.

During the darker period of the winter the uncertainty of the weather was such that, from a perfect calm and clear weather, a few hours would change the scene to a howling tempest and thick drift, in which, if one had been caught, death must inevitably have followed; great care was therefore necessary, in taking our walks, to prevent being so overtaken; yet walks of seven or eight miles from the vessels were on several occasions performed, and the severest temperature faced and mastered with impunity. I remember well, on the 13th January, seeing mercury in a solid mass, with a temperature of 40° below zero, and being one of a good many who had taken three hours' hard walking for mere pleasure.

We joked not a little at the fireside stories at home of bitter cold nights, and being frozen to death on some English heath: it seemed to us so incredible that people should be frostbitten because the air was below freezing-point; whilst we should have hailed with delight the

thermometer standing at zero, and, indeed, looked forward to such a state of our climate as people in the temperate zone would to May sunshine and flowers.

With the increasing twilight many an anxious eye was cast from the top of Griffith Island towards the straits, to see the prospect of good foot-travelling offered by the floe. It was not cheering, for broken and hummocky ice met the eye whichever way one looked, with here and there a small smooth space; and if it appeared so to the eye, we knew full well that when actually amongst those hummocks the travelling would be arduous indeed. There was some time, however, to elapse before the tussle commenced, and many a snow-storm had time, meanwhile, to rage. With seamen's sanguineness we hoped that snow-drifts would fill up the hollows, and help to smooth over the broken pack: any way, we all knew "a long pull, a strong pull, and a pull altogether" would master more difficulties than as yet had shown themselves in the arctic regions.

Such were our occupations, such the amusements, such the hopes and fears, of our first winter quarters off Griffith Island; and looking back at that period, we happily forget its dreariness and recollect only its brighter moments—the fast friendship there formed for many, the respect and admiration for all.

February 7, 1851.—The stentorian lungs of the Resolute's boatswain hailed to say the sun was in sight from the mast-head; and in all the vessels the rigging was soon manned to get the first glimpse of the returning god of day. Slowly it rose; and loud and hearty cheers greeted the return of an orb which those without the

frozen zone do not half appreciate, because he is always with them. For ninety-six days it had not gladdened us, and now its return put fresh life into our night-wearied bodies. For a whole hour we feasted ourselves with admiring the sphere of fire, which illumined without warming us; and, indeed, the cold increased rather than otherwise, and our lowest temperature and severest weather did not occur until March.

Preparations for spring travelling were now hastened; daily committees of officers met to discuss every point, and to receive, approve, or reject proposals and plans. Every soul, high and low, exerted his ingenuity and abilities to invent articles, portable and useful, for sledge travellers; whilst others sent in to the leader of the expedition schemes of search, in which distances, directions, weights, and material were duly considered. Hopes rose high, for Captain Austin had wisely appealed to individual ability and skill. Every one naturally (for orders "to put the men in training" did not come out until afterwards) commenced to "harden up" for the labour ahead. Zealous individuals might be daily seen trying all sorts of patents. Out of their hard-earned wages some of the men bought and made sails of peculiar cut for their sledges; others constructed water-bottles, velocipedes, cooking-tins; in fact, neither pains nor trouble were spared. Never have I witnessed in the navy such emulation, such enthusiasm.

Early in March an interchange of visits between our squadron and that under Captain Penny opened the communication. His crews had got through the winter equally well with ourselves, and he, in like manner, was

hard at work, preparing for the foot journeys; but as no sledges or other equipment had been brought by him from England, every nerve had to be strained, and every resource called into existence, to enable him to overcome his difficulties in lack of material.

On the 8th of March, at 11 A.M., the temperature in the shade having been a couple of hours previously at 41° below zero, and mercury solid in the open air, we were delighted to see a solitary drop of water trickle down the black paint of the Pioneer's side: at that moment, oddly enough, the temperature in the shade was—36°, and in the sun the thermometer only rose to 2° below zero! Water, however, it undoubtedly was, and, as such, we cheerfully hailed it. It was a pledge of returning summer; and it was a strange, yet natural, sight to see the crowd of eager faces congratulating each other over a single drop of water. All March was a scene of constant business, diversified with sledge-parades, recalling, by contrast, to my mind unpleasant recollections of sweltering field-days and grand parades with ancient admirals on the distant plateaus of South America. "Ay de me! Valparaiso!"

Having briefly touched upon the leading incidents connected with our winter, and brought events up to the preparations for a search on foot, it may not here be out of place to give a brief sketch of the causes which had brought about the necessity for so many Englishmen to be thus sojourning in these inclement regions, as well as occasioned the voyage of that distinguished navigator whose squadron we hoped to rescue.

The seamen of northern Europe, the Norsemen and

Scandinavians, from the earliest records extant, sought for the glory attendant upon braving the perils of polar seas. From A.D. 860 to 982, from the sea-rover Naddod's discovery of Iceland, to Eirek "of the Red Hand's" landing on Greenland, near Hergolf's Ness, neither wreck nor tempest checked the steady onward march of their explorations; and they robbed eventually the immortal Genoese of one-half his honours, by actually landing, under the pirate Biarni, on the continent of America.

In Greenland, a hardy race, the descendants of these northland pirates, appear to have multiplied, for, in A.D. 1400, a flourishing colony stood on the threshold of the New World. Converted to Christianity, the cathedral of Garda was constructed, and the archives of Iceland prove it to have been successively held by no less than seventeen bishops; the Greenland colonies were known under the general terms of East and West Bygd (Bight), and numbered in all sixteen parishes and two hundred and eighty farms, numerously populated.

Strict commercial monopoly, and the naturally secluded position of the Scandinavian colony in Greenland, seem to have occasioned its ultimate decadence; or, as traditions tell us, a sudden hostile inroad of the Esquimaux swept off the isolated Europeans. From either cause, it is certain that there remained, after the lapse of two centuries, but the moss-covered ruins of a few churches—some Runic inscriptions—and the legends of the Esquimaux, who talk of a tall fair-haired race, their giants of old.

The heirloom of the northern pirates, the dominion of

the sea, passed, however, into England's hands, and with it that same daring love of the difficult and unknown which had led the Viking from conquest to conquest; and whilst southern Europe sought for the wealth of the Indies in the more genial regions of the south, English seamen pushed their barks to the west, in the boisterous seas of high northern latitudes. Confining myself purely to those who essayed the passage to Cathay, Cipango, and the Indies, by the north-west, first on the glorious scroll stands Frobisher. That sturdy seaman of Elizabeth's gallant navy, on the 11th of July 1576, with three craft, whose united burden only amounted to *seventy-five tons*,—this "proud admiral"—sighted the east coast of Greenland, in 61° north latitude. Unable to approach it for ice, which then, as now, hampers the whole of that coast, he was blown by a gale far to the south-west to the coast of Labrador, but reached eventually to 63° north latitude, and landed in Frobisher Strait. He extricated his vessels with difficulty, and returned home, carrying a quantity of mica, which was mistaken for gold; this awakened the cupidity of the court, nobles, and merchants. Three more expeditions sailed, exhibiting laudable courage and skill, but adding little to our geographical knowledge.

Such a succession of miscarriages damped for a while the ardour for north-west discovery; until, in 1585, "divers worshipful merchants of London and the west country, moved by the desire of advancing God's glory, and the good of their native land," equipped one John Davis for a voyage of discovery to the unknown regions of the north-west.

Piteous as were his hardships—doleful as were his tales of the "lothsome view of y^e^ shore, and y^e^ irksome noyse of y^e^ yce;" "y^e^ stinking fogs and cruelle windes" of Desolation Land—the seamen of that day seemed each to have determined to see and judge for himself, and they were ably supported by the open-handed liberality of wealthy private individuals, and the corporation of London merchants, who, if we may judge of them by such men as Sir John Wolstenholme, Dudley, Digges, Jones, and others, soared far above Smithfield nuisances and committees on sewers. After Davis came Waymouth, and then Hudson, who perished amid the scenes of his hardships and honours. Captains Button and Bylot, followed by the ablest, the prince, of arctic navigators—Baffin—he sweeping, in one short season, round the great bay which records his fame, showed us of the present day the highroad to the west; and did more, for he saw more of that coast in one season than any modern seaman has yet been able to accomplish. Lastly, in that olden time, we have the sagacious and quaint Nor'-West Fox, carrying our flag to the head of Hudson Bay; whilst James's fearful sufferings in the southern extreme of the same locality, completed, for a while, the labours of British seamen in these regions.

A lull then took place, occasioned by the granting of a charter to certain noblemen and merchants in 1668, under the title of "Governor and Company of Adventurers of England" trading into Hudson Bay, with the understanding that the discovery of a north-west passage was to be persevered in by them. During a century, they only accomplished, by their servants, "Hearne and Mac-

kenzie"—the former in 1771, and the latter in 1789—the tracing of the Coppermine and the Mackenzie rivers to their embouchures into an arctic sea in the 70th parallel of north latitude. A temporary interest on the part of Great Britain, during the fighting reign of George III., occasioned two names, dear to every seaman's recollection, to be associated with the accomplishment of geographical discovery in this same direction. Nelson served with Captain Phipps, afterwards Lord Mulgrave, in his attempt to pass over the Pole; and then the greatest of English navigators, Cook, in 1776, failed to round the American continent by coming to the eastward from Behring Strait.

At the commencement of the current century, our knowledge of the northern outline of the American continent amounted to a mere fraction. On the west Cook had hardly penetrated beyond Behring Strait; and on the east, Hudson and Baffin Bays formed the limit of our geographical knowledge, except at two points, where the sea had been seen by Hearne and Mackenzie.

Shortly after the peace of 1815, the late Sir John Barrow, whose genius and ability were only to be equalled by his perseverance, turned his attention to arctic discovery, and especially the North-West passage. He had himself been to Spitzbergen, and as far north as the 80th parallel of latitude. Combating the prejudiced, convincing the doubtful, and teaching the ignorant, he awakened national pride and professional enterprise in a cause in which English seamen had already won high honours, and Great Britain's glory was especially involved. What difficulties he mastered, and how well he was seconded

by others, and none more so than by the enlightened First Lord of the Admiralty, Viscount Melville, Sir John Barrow himself has told, in the able volumes which imperishably chronicle the deeds of ancient and modern explorers in polar regions. Since 1818 British navigators may have been said to have constantly added to our knowledge of the north-west.

The first in the field was Captain John Ross in 1818, and in 1819 Parry sailed to commence that magnificent series of discoveries which, followed up by Franklin, Richardson, Beechey, the Rosses, Back, Simpson, and Rae, have left us, after thirty-five years of well-spent toil and devotion, in perfect possession of the geographical features of arctic America, and added *three thousand six hundred and eighty miles* of coast-line to our polar charts. Is this nothing? If the mere *quid pro quo* is required of public servants, surely the arctic navigator has far better repaid to his country what he has received at her hands than those who, in a time of universal peace, idle through year after year of foreign service in her men-of-war; and most assuredly, if we are proud of our seamen's fame and our naval renown, where can we look for nobler instances of it than amongst the records of our arctic voyages? The calm heroic sufferings of Franklin—always successful, let the price be what it would; the iron resolution of Richardson; Back's fearful winter-march to save his comrades; the devoted Hepburn, who, old though he be, could not see his former leader perish without trying to help him, and, whilst I write these lines, is again braving an arctic winter in the little Prince Albert; Parry, who knew so well to lead and yet be loved;

James Ross, of iron frame, establishing, by four consecutive years of privation and indomitable energy, that high character which enabled him to carry an English squadron to the unvisited shores of Victoria Land at the southern pole; and, lastly, the chivalrous men who, again under Franklin, have launched, in obedience to their Queen and country, into the unknown regions between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, to execute their mission or fall in the attempt.*

It was to save these last devoted servants that the spring of 1851 saw full 500 British and American seamen within the frigid zone. That portion of them that had come by Baffin Bay had been so far successful in their mission that they had dispelled all the visions—gratuitous enough—of Franklin having perished by shipwreck or other disaster in his passage across the bay.

We had seen his winter quarters—we had seen his look-out posts and the trail of his explorations. They all said, Onward! To be sure, we did not at once know by which route he had gone onward. The uncertainty, however, gave a greater spur to those about to be engaged in the searching parties, and each man thought there were especial reasons for believing his particular

* The subsequent voyage of the Investigator, and the passage of her crew from the Pacific to the Atlantic, under the magnificent guidance of Captain Sir Robert M'Clure, the voyage of the Fox under the untiring energy of Sir Leopold M'Clintock, and the discovery of the fate of Franklin's expedition after a search of ten years' duration, fitly close another epoch in arctic exploration. The work will, we doubt not, be perfected by future generations of equally adventurous sailors, and the poles of our earth be as well known to man as the sources of the Nile, or "the antres vast and deserts idle" of Central Africa.

route to be the true one. The majority—indeed all those who gave the subject any consideration—believed Franklin to have gone either by Cape Walker, or to the north-west by Wellington Channel.

Hope, thank God, rode high in every breast, and already did the men begin to talk of what they would do with their new shipmates from the Erebus and Terror when they had them on board their respective ships; and I have no doubt they would have done as one gallant fellow replied, when I asked him if he thought himself equal to dragging 200 lb. "O yes, sir, and Sir John Franklin too, when we find him."

Increasing light, decreasing cold, plenty to do, and certain anticipations upon each man's part that he would be the fortunate one to find and save Franklin, made the month of April come in on us before we had time to think of it, but not before we were ready.

The original intention was for the sledges to have started on the different routes laid down by our Commodore on the 8th of April; but a fall of temperature on the 6th altered this plan, and a delay of one week was decided upon. I therefore availed myself of the occasion to visit Captain Penny's winter quarters, proceeding there on the dog-sledge of Mr Petersen, who happened to be on board our vessel at the time.

Nothing, I conceive, can be more exhilarating than dog-sledging in the arctic regions on a fine day, especially when, as in my case, the whole affair has the charm of novelty. The rattling pace of the dogs; their intelligence in choosing the road through the broken ice; the strict obedience paid by the team to one powerful dog

whom they elect as leader; the arbitrary exercise of authority by the master dog; the constant use of the whip, and a sort of running conversation kept up by the driver with the different dogs, who well knew their names—as in turn Sampson! Caniche! Foxey! Terror! &c., were duly anathematised—afforded constant amusement. Petersen's conversation was replete with interest, and the information he gave me of the distances accomplished on the coast of Greenland by the Danes with dog-sledges, made me regret much we had not provided ourselves with a team or two for accomplishing any necessarily rapid journey.

When Mr Petersen at Uppernavik so nobly threw up an appointment under the Danish crown to serve as interpreter with Penny in the search for Franklin, he brought with him a sledge and a few dogs: these had twice littered, and the numerous puppies were already grown into serviceable dogs, forming two efficient teams. During the major part of the winter, scarcity of food, such as seal and bear, had told severely upon the poor creatures; but an Esquimaux dog lives on little when not worked; and, with a little oatmeal and grease, they had all outlived the severe season; and some bear's flesh having been now procured, there was every probability of good service being rendered by them. Our rate of travelling was more than five miles per hour; and though making a considerable detour to avoid broken ice, I was shaking Penny by the hand four hours after leaving the Pioneer, the distance between the squadrons being about twenty miles in a straight line.

I was much struck with the great advantage of ships

wintering in harbour, and near the shore, over a position such as our squadron's in the midst of the floe. There was a cheerfulness in the vicinity of the land, barren though it was, quite refreshing to those who had always a mile to walk during the winter to reach Griffith Island, or remain satisfied with the monotony of an ice-field. Besides being snug in harbour, Captain Penny, satisfied of the security of his vessels, intended to leave only one man in each of them, every other soul being told off for sledge-parties; whereas our squadron required sixty men and officers to take care of them, exposed as they were to be swept into Barrow Strait by any sudden disruption of the ice. I therefore gave my adhesion to the opinion expressed by authorities at home, to secure winter quarters in some bay or harbour, and never to winter in the pack, unless it is unavoidable.

The oldest English officer who had ever wintered within the arctic circle on a voyage of discovery, Sir John Ross, was not likely to be forgotten by me; and I sincerely congratulated the veteran on his escape from sickness during the past winter; and though a wonderful instance of physical endurance, I, with others, could not but feel regret that a naval officer so advanced in years, and who had served so long, should be compelled to undergo privations of which those who did not witness them can form no conception.

Time enabled me to do little more than admire the perseverance displayed by Captain Penny, his officers and men, in their preparations for travelling. Sledges, cooking apparatuses, tents, in short everything was ready, having been made by themselves in the course of the

winter; and, on the 13th April, six sledges, drawn by seamen, with an officer to each, and provisioned for forty days, would start for Wellington Channel, there to part into two divisions—Captain Stewart of the Sophia taking the one side of the Channel, whilst Captain Penny, with two extra dog-sledges, would direct the search in general. Delighted with all the arrangements, and equally so with the high spirit of chivalrous devotion apparent in our gallant coadjutors, my heart was full as I said "Good-bye" to my hospitable Scotch friends on the 11th of April; and a rapid drive by Mr Petersen carried me to the Pioneer in less than three hours. After a short halt he returned to Assistance Harbour, doing full forty miles within twelve hours on his dog-sledge.

I was astonished to find, on my return, that as yet the temperature at our winter quarters had not been registered as being above zero; whereas, in Assistance Harbour, Captain Penny's quarters, the thermometer had occasionally for the past week ranged above it, and on the day before I left showed 11° in the shade. This difference of temperature was doubtless occasioned by the radiation of heat from the land, by which they were, unlike ourselves, surrounded.

During my absence I was told that Mr M'Dougal, of the Resolute, who had been despatched as early as the 4th April to inspect the depots formed in the autumn, had returned to the ships, and brought accounts of a wholesale destruction of the one on Somerville Island by bears. Hunger and mischievousness seemed alike to have induced the brutes to break and tear to pieces what they could not possibly eat—such as tins of patent cho-

colate, some of which were fairly bitten through. This information induced us all to take extra precautions in securing the provisions, of which depots during the march were to be formed.

It is now time to describe the sledges and their equipment, upon the completeness of which the lives of our travellers were soon so entirely to depend.

The sledges, constructed of tough and well-seasoned wood, had been carefully constructed in Woolwich dockyard. They were shod with iron, and the cross-bars or battens which connected the two runners, and formed the floor upon which the load was placed, were lashed in their places by us when required for use. At the four corners of the sledges light iron stanchions dropped into sockets, and formed the support for the sides of a species of tray or boat, capable of serving to ferry the sledge-crew across water in an emergency, as well as to keep the provisions and clothing in it dry. This boat was made in some cases of gutta percha, in others of oiled canvass—the latter was preferred;

	lb.
And, together with the sledge and drag-ropes, which were made of horsehair, to prevent their becoming hard and brittle from frost, weighed	120
Two fur blankets and spare felt-blanket, weighed . . .	40
Nine blanket-bags for sleeping in, ...	42
A tent, of oblong form, made of fine brown holland, supported by four boarding-pikes, and a line which served as a ridge-rope, and was set up to any heavy thing that came to hand,	55
Mackintosh floor-cloth to spread over the snow or gravel, .	12
A shovel to dig out snow for banking-up with, ...	5½
A cooking apparatus, invented by Lieut. M'Clintock, capable of cooking a pint apiece of tea, cocoa, or pemmican, with a spirit-lamp, tallow-lamp, and spare kettle, . . .	17

	lb.
Sextant, 1 gun, and gear,	10
A bag containing 5 tin pannikins and 5 spoons,	5
A knapsack for each man, containing 1 flannel shirt, 1 Guernsey frock, 1 serge frock, 1 pair of flannel drawers, 1 pair of boot-hose, 1 pair of stockings, 2 pairs of blanket-socks, 1 towel, 1 comb, 1 lb. soap,	48
Spare boots, and thick Guernsey frocks for sleeping in,	36
A tin case, containing pepper, salt, herbs dried, lucifer matches, grog-measure, calico and flannel bandages, adhesive plaster, lint, liniment, eye-wash, pills, simple ointment, glycerine, lancet, tincture of opium, pins, needles, and thread,	16
Store-bag, containing broom or brush for sweeping the tent down with, spare boot-soles, wax, bristles, twine, shoe-tacks, crape, awls, slow-match, nettle stuff, and strips of hide, cylinders for documents, printed records,	11
Spare ammunition, cleaning-rods, and wrench,	14
Kites and string,	12½
Dead weight,	440

Such were the weights of the sledge equipment in the case of one of those intended for a long journey. Nothing, it will be seen, was forgotten, and there was nothing superfluous; yet, as the 440 lb. had to be dragged by six men, there was already 73 lb. per man, which would, from its nature, be hardly any lighter at the end of the journey; and as about 200 lb. was judged to be as much as a man could drag, there only remained 127 lb. per man available for provision and package.

The daily scale of provision, as ordered by Captain Austin, during the journeys, was to be as follows:—

Pemmican,	1 lb.
Boiled pork,	6 oz.
Biscuit,	12 oz.
Rum, concentrated,	¾ gill.
Tobacco,	½ oz.

Biscuit dust,	1 oz.
Tea and sugar,	¾ oz.
Chocolate and sugar (alternate days),	1¾ oz.
Lime-juice (for 10 days),	½ oz.

The fuel allowed to cook this, for a party of seven men, amounted to one pint and one gill of spirits of wine, or 1 lb. 8 oz. of tallow.

A little calculation soon showed that about forty days' provision was as much as any one sledge could take with it, or for an outward journey of about twenty days; which, at an average distance of ten miles per diem, would only give an extent of coast-line examined by any one sledge of 200 miles.

Before I endeavour to show how, by a system of depots and relays, greater distances were achieved, the complete load of a long-party sledge may as well be shown.

	lb.
Total dead weight,	440
Pemmican and cases,	330
Biscuit and dust, &c.,	278
Pork and packages,	123
Tea, sugar, chocolate, tobacco, &c., in a case,	47
Lime-juice and rum,	67
Spirits of wine and tallow,	78
Sundries, tins, &c.,	45
Number of men to drag, 7,	2408
	201 per man.

The officer's load consisted of a gun, powder and ball, telescope, compass, and note-book; and as all the party, in anticipation of cold weather, had to be heavily clad, it may be supposed that the total weight to be dragged through snow and over rough ice was quite as much as

the stoutest physical powers were capable of. Several days previous to departure we had travelled short journeys, in perfect marching order, and sledges laden,—an arrangement which was highly beneficial; and from the way the sledges went over the floe, they gave us high hopes of answering our expectations in the forthcoming march.

From headquarters the following arrangement of sledges was made public:—

Captain Erasmus Ommanney was to cross Barrow Strait to Cape Walker, with the following sledges and officers under his orders: he was there to use his own judgment as to the disposal of the force, it being required, in the event of two routes showing themselves—viz., one to the S.W., and the other W.—that I was to be ordered to take up the latter. Our entire division consisted of—

	Name of Sledge.	Motto.	Manned by
Long-party sledge	Reliance	*Domine dirige nos* . . .	Captain Ommanney, six men.
Ditto ditto .	True Blue	*Nil desperandum* . . .	Lieutenant Osborn, seven men.
Supporting sledge	Succour	*Sequor juvare*	Lieutenant G. F. Mecham, six men.
Ditto ditto .	Enterprise	Gaze where some distant speck a sail implies, With all the thirsting gaze of enterprise.	Lieutenant W. H. Browne, six men.
Ditto ditto . to Lieut. Osborn	Adventure	Nothing adventure, nothing win	Mr Vesey Hamilton (mate), seven men.
Ditto ditto .	Inflexible	*Respice finem*	Mr Charles Ede (assist. surg.), six men.
Ditto ditto .	Success	One and all	Mr F. S. Krabbe (2d master), seven men.

To the highly important direction northward up the unknown channel of Byam Martin Island, and which, as Lieutenant Aldrich very properly thought, would intercept the course of Franklin, should he, from Wellington Channel, have sailed north about for Behring Strait, two sledges were told off under that officer:—

Long-party sledge, .	Lady Franklin,	Faithful and firm, .	Lieut. R. D. Aldrich, 7 men.
Supporting sledge, .	Hotspur, .	*In Deo confide*, .	Mr R. R. Pearse (mate), 7 men.

Lastly, to Melville Island, on which route a depot, forty miles in advance, had already been placed in the autumn, and renewed in the spring, the following party was appointed: Lieutenant M'Clintock, on his reaching the said island, acting as he should judge fit as to despatching Mr Bradford along the northern shores, whilst he prosecuted the search to and beyond Winter Harbour:—

Long-party sledge, .	Perseverance,	Persevere to the end, . .	Lieut. M'Clintock, 6 men.
Do.	Resolute, .	St George and merry England, . . . Onward to the rescue, . .	Dr Bradford, 6 men.
Supporting sledge, .	Excellent, .	*Respice, prospice*, . . .	Mr W. May (mate), 6 men.
Do.	Dasher, .	Faithful and intrepid, . .	Mr Shellabear (2d master), 6 men.
Do.	Parry, . .	Endeavour to deserve, . .	Mr Cheyne (mate), 7 men.

Mr M'Dougal, I have before said, started during the first week of April with his sledge, the Beaufort. He had to replenish the depot formed for Lieutenant

M'Clintock, and then to connect the search round a deep bay, which was supposed to connect Bathurst and Cornwallis Lands.

Thus fifteen sledges, manned by 105 men and officers, were equipped for the search, leaving on board the four vessels of the squadron seventy-five souls, which number was afterwards further reduced by Mr R. C. Allen being sent to search the islands to the westward with the sledge Grinnell and seven men.

It now only remains for me to show in what manner it was proposed to enable the supporting sledges to apply their resources, so that the long parties should reach far beyond the 200 miles, or twenty days' journey, of which they were alone capable when dependent on their own provision.

The plan pursued in the southern division will illustrate the mode of proceeding. The junior supporting sledge, Success, was capable of feeding all the division for five days (by which time we hoped to be at Cape Walker), and then have sufficient food to return back to the squadron, where it could again replenish, and, returning to the same point at which we had separated from it, form such a depot that each of the sledges in return would find five days' provisions to carry them home. By this means six out of the seven sledges in the southern search will be seen to reach a point fifty miles from their original starting point in perfect condition, so far as their provisions are concerned.

We will, for the sake of clearness, cause these six sledges to form into three divisions, of two each—viz., a long-party sledge and a support. In each case the sup-

port can feed the long-party for another ten days, and then form a depot of provision equal to ten days more, yet have sufficient left itself to reach back to Walker, and thence home. The long-party would thus be still complete, after receiving two supports, equal to fifteen days, or 150 miles; and two depots stand in their rear, the one for ten days, the other for five days. The long-party now starts, consuming its own provision (forming its own depots for the returning march), advances for twenty days, and accomplishes 200 miles; which, with that done whilst supported, makes in all a journey outward of thirty-five days, or 350 miles from the ships. Of course, with an increased number of supports, this distance and time may be carried on as long as the strength of the men will endure, or the travelling season admit of.

On the 12th of April, the day calm and cold, some 50° below freezing-point of water, a scene of bustle and merriment showed that the sledges were mustering previous to being taken to the starting point, under the north-west bluff of Griffith Island, to which they marched with due military pomp in two columns, directed by our chiefs. Our sense of decorum was constantly overthrown by the gambols of divers puppies given to us by Captain Penny, with small sledges attached to them, their food duly marked and weighed, with flags and mottoes, perfect facsimiles of our own, which were racing about, entangling themselves, howling for assistance, or else running between the men's legs and capsizing them on the snow, amidst shouts of laughter, and sly witticisms at the *tenders*, as they were termed. Reaching

the halting place, tents were pitched, luncheon served out, and all of us were then inspected, and a speech made, which, as was afterwards remarked, buttered us all up admirably; and the thanks of our leader given to Mr M'Clintock, to whose foresight, whilst in England, and to whose valuable information collated during his sledging experiences under Sir James Ross in 1849, we were now indebted for the perfect equipment we now had with us.

The inspection over, we trudged back to our ships. Next day, Sunday, was spent mainly by the men in cooking and eating—knowing, as they did, that there were a good many banian days ahead—packing up and putting away their kits, and making little arrangements in the event of accidents to themselves. Monday was no day for a start; but on the evening of Tuesday the 15th April the breeze slackened, and, the temperature only some 14° below freezing-point, we donned our marching attire, girded up our loins, and all hands proceeded to the sledges.

As we shut in our wooden homes behind a projecting point of Griffith Island, the weather suddenly changed, and a fast-increasing breeze enveloped us in snow-drift. Reaching the sledges, and shaking them clear from the snow of the last two days, a hasty cup of tea and a mouthful of biscuit were partaken of. All hands then assembled, and our warm-hearted leader read a short prayer, beseeching His mercy and guidance whose kind providence we all knew could alone support us in the hazardous journey we were about to undertake. Hearty farewells, in which rough jokes covered many a kindly

wish towards one another, passed from sledge to sledge; and then, grasping their tracking-lines, a hundred hoarse voices joined in loud cheers, and the divisions of sledges, diverging on their different routes, were soon lost to one another in snow and mist.

An April night, with its grey twilight, was no match for the darkness of a snow-storm from the S.W., and we had almost to feel our road through the broken ice off the bluffs of Griffith Island.

At two o'clock in the morning we reached much piled-up ice; and in the hope of clearer weather in the evening, the word to halt and pitch the tents was given. The seven sledges of the division, picking out the smoothest spots, were soon secured. The tents fluttering in the breeze, a cup of tea was cooked, short orders given, and then each man got into his blanket-bag, and dreamt of a fine day and finding Sir John Franklin.

Next day the weather was still as thick as pea-soup, with a double-reef-topsail breeze blowing in our teeth; but detention was impossible, so we again packed up, after a meal of chocolate and biscuit, and facing towards Cape Walker, we carried the hummocks by storm. Ignorance was bliss. Straight ahead, over and through everything, was the only way; and, fresh, hearty, and strong, we surmounted tier after tier, which more light and a clearer view might only have frightened us from attempting. Here a loud cheer told where a sledge had scaled the pile in its path, or shot in safety down the slope of some huge hummock. There the cry, One! two! three! haul! of a jammed sledge, and quizzical jokes upon name, flag, or motto, betokened that Success

or True Blue had floundered into a snow-wreath, above which the top of the sledge-load was only to be seen, whilst seven red-faced mortals, grinning, and up to their waists in snow, were perseveringly endeavouring to extricate it; officers encouraging and showing the way; the men labouring and laughing. A wilder or more spirit-stirring scene cannot be imagined.

A hard night's toil cleared all obstacles. An average fair floe was before us, sweeping with a curve to the base of Cape Walker; but a fresh difficulty was then met with, in the total absence of hummock or berg-piece, by which to preserve a course in the thick foggy weather, that lasted whilst the warm south wind blew. Imagine, kind reader, a greyish haze, with fast-falling snow, a constant wind in the face, and yourself trying to steer a straight course where floe and sky were of one uniform colour. A hand dog-vane was found the best guide, for, of course, it was impossible to keep a compass constantly in hand; and the officers forming in a line ahead, so as just to keep a good sight of one another, were followed by the sledges, the crews of which soon learnt that the easiest mode of travelling, and most equal division of labour, consisted in marching directly after one another; but, as the leading sledge had the extra work of breaking the road through the snow, and straining the men's eyes in keeping sight of the officers, the sledges were changed every half-hour or hour, according to circumstances.

It will be observed that we travelled by night, and hoped by such means to avoid the glare of the sun, and consequent snow-blindness. It entailed, however, at

this early season of the year, great suffering in the shape of cold, the people being exposed to the weather during the severest part of the twenty-four hours. From the 15th to the 19th the weather was of the same nature,—constant gales of wind in our faces, snow-storms, and heavy drift, against which we struggled, cheered by a rising temperature that we flattered ourselves would end in summer,—a mistake for which we afterwards suffered bitterly, the men having, from the ease with which they at first kept themselves warm, become careless of their clothing, and heedless of those precautions against frost-bite which a winter's experience ought to have taught them.

Easter Sunday came in gloomily, with the wind inclined to veer to the northward, and with every appearance of bad weather. Setting our sails and kites on the sledges, when the wind served, the division hurried on for Cape Walker, which loomed now and then through the snow-drift ahead of us. The rapidity of the pace at which we then advanced—thanks to the help afforded by the sails—threw all into a profuse perspiration, especially the seamen, who really looked as if toiling under a tropical sun rather than in an arctic night, with the temperature below freezing-point. Fatigue obliged us to halt short of the land, and postpone for another day's march the landing on the unvisited shores of Cape Walker.

During the sleeping hours, the increased attention to the fur covering, and our own sensations, told us that the temperature was falling; and the poor cook, with a rueful countenance, announced that it was below zero as he

prepared the morning meal. More than usual difficulty was found in pulling on our stiffly-frozen boots, stockings, and outer garments; and when the men went out of the tent they soon found their clothing freeze perfectly hard from the action of the intense cold on what had been for several days saturated with perspiration. To start and march briskly was now the only safety, and in double-quick time tents were down and sledges moving. A nor'-wester was fast breezing up, and as the night of Easter Monday closed around us, the cold increased with alarming rapidity. One of those magnificent conglomerations of halos and parhelia common to these regions lit up the northern heavens, and the brilliant warm colouring and startling number of false suns seemed as if to be mocking the sufferings of our gallant fellows, who, with faces averted and bended bodies, strained every nerve to reach the land, in hopes of obtaining more shelter than the naked floe afforded from the nipping effects of the cutting gale. Every moment some fresh case of frost-bite would occur, which the watchful care of the officers would immediately detect. The man would fall out from his sledge, restore the circulation of the affected part, generally the face, and then hasten back to his post. Constant questions of "How are your feet?" were heard on all sides, with the general response, "Oh! I hope they are all right; but I've not felt them since I pulled my boots on."

One halt was made to remove and change all leather boots, which, in consequence of our late warm weather, had been taken into use, but were now no longer safe; and then, with a rally, the piled-up floe around the cliffs

of Cape Walker was reached. Cold and hungry as we were, it must have been a heavy barrier indeed to have stopped our men from taking their sledges to the land; and although the floe was piled against the Cape full fifty feet high, we carried our craft over it in safety, and just in time too, for the north-west wind rushed down upon us, as if to dispute our right to intrude on its dominion. Hastily securing the tents, we hurried in to change our boots, and to see whether our feet were frost-bitten or not; for it was only by ocular proof that one could be satisfied of their safety, sensation having long ceased. I shall not easily forget my painful feelings when one gallant fellow of my party, the captain of the sledge, exclaimed, "Both feet gone, sir!" and sure enough they were,—white as two lumps of ice, and equally cold; for as we of the tent party anxiously in turn placed our warm hands on the frost-bitten feet, the heat was extracted in a marvellously short time, and our half-frozen hands had to be succeeded by fresh ones as quickly as possible. With returning circulation the poor fellow's agonies must have been intense; and some time afterwards large blisters formed over the frost-bitten parts, as if his feet had been severely scalded. Sadly cramped as we were for room, it was much worse when a sick man was amongst our number. Sleep was out of the question; and to roll up in the smallest possible compass, and try to think of something else than the cold, which pierced to the very marrow in one's bones, was our only resource.

Next day, Tuesday, 22d April, wind N.W., blowing hard, and temperature at 44° below freezing-point, parties

left the encampment under Lieutenants Browne and Mecham to look around for cairns, and report upon the trend of the land, whilst the rest of us secured a depot of Halkett's boats, and built a cairn as a record of our visit.

As it is not my intention to give a detailed account of the operations of the southern division, but merely to tell of those events which will convey to the reader a general idea of the incidents connected with arctic travelling, I shall without further comment give them, leaving to the curious in the minutiæ of the journeys the amusement of reading in the Admiralty blue-books the details of when we ate, drank, slept, or marched.

Cape Walker was found to form the eastern and most lofty extreme of a land trending to the south-west on its northern coast, and to the south on its eastern shore. The cape itself, full 1000 feet in altitude, was formed of red sandstone and conglomerate, very abrupt to the eastward, but dipping with an undulating outline to the west.

In its immediate neighbourhood no traces of Franklin having visited it were to be seen, and as a broad channel ran to the southward (there was every reason to believe down to the American continent, and thence to Behring Strait), by which Franklin might have attempted to pass, Captain Ommanney very properly despatched Lieutenant Browne to examine the coast of Cape Walker Land, down the channel to the southward.* The Success sledge was then started for the ship with the invalids,

* This paragraph is left untouched from the first edition. Franklin's remains were found in after years just 200 miles down this very channel.

and the five remaining sledges, on the evening of the 24th of April, marched to the westward. Previous to that date it had been impossible to move, on account of a strong gale in our faces, together with a severe temperature.

Every mile that we advanced showed us that the coast was one which could only be approachable by ships at extraordinary seasons. The ice appeared the accumulation of many years, and bore, for some forty miles, a quite undisturbed look. Then we passed into a region with still more aged features. There the inequalities on the surface, occasioned by the repeated snows of winters and thaws of summer, gave it the appearance of a constant succession of hill and dale. Entangled amongst it, our men laboured with untiring energy, up steep acclivities and through pigmy ravines, in which the loose snow caused them to sink deeply, and sadly increased their toil. To avoid this description of ice, amongst which a lengthened journey became perfectly hopeless, we struck in for the land, preferring the heavy snow that encumbered the beach to such a heartbreaking struggle as that on the floe. Irreparable injury had, however, been done to our crews during our last day's labour amongst the hummocks. A fine clear evening had given us the full effects of a powerful sunlight upon the pure virgin-snow: the painful effect those alone can conceive who have witnessed it. All was white, brilliant and dazzling; the eye in vain turned from earth to heaven for rest or shade—there was none. An unclouded sunlight poured through the calm and frosty air with merciless power, and the sun being exactly in our faces increased the intensity of its effects.

That day several complained of a dull aching sensation in the eyeball, as if it had been overstrained, and on the morrow blindness was rapidly coming on. From experience, I can speak of the mental anxiety which must have supervened at the thought of one's entire helplessness, and the encumbrance one had become to others, who, God knows, had troubles and labour enough of their own. Gradually the film spread itself, objects became dimmer and dimmer, and at last all was darkness, with an intense horror of the slightest ray of sunlight. In this condition, many of the four sledge-parties reached a place called by us all, in commemoration of the event, "Snow-blind Point," at the entrance of a bay in 100° W. long.

Unable to advance in consequence of a severe gale, which now raged for six-and-thirty hours, we found, on the 1st of May, that sixteen men and one officer were, more or less, snow-blind and otherwise unwell; a large proportion out of the entire number of thirty souls. To be ill in any place is trying enough; but such an hospital as a brown-holland tent, with the thermometer in it at 18° below zero, the snow for a bed, your breath forming into small ice-crystals called "barber," which penetrated into our very innermost garments, and no water to be procured to assuage the thirst of fever until snow had been melted for the purpose, called for much patience on the part of the patients, and true Samaritan feelings on the part of the "doctors,"—a duty which had now devolved on each officer of a sledge-party, or, in default of him, upon some kind volunteer amongst the men. Happily, the effects of snow-blindness are not lasting, for we

recovered as suddenly as we had been struck down. The gale blew itself out, leaving all calm and still, as if the death-like scenery was incapable of such wild revelry as it had been enjoying; and again we plodded onwards, parting from the last supporting sledge on the 6th of May.

Since leaving Cape Walker on the 24th of April, we had gradually passed from a red sandstone to a limestone region; the scenery at every mile becoming more and more monotonous, and less marked by bold outline, cliff or mountain. As far as the bay, of which Snow-blind Point formed one extreme, a long range of hills, soft and rounded in contour, faced the sea, and sloped to it with a gradual inclination, some three miles in length; ravines became more and more scarce; and after passing the bay, none of any size were to be seen: Drearily monotonous as all arctic scenery must naturally be, when one universal mantle of snow makes earth and water alike, such a tame region as this was, if possible, more so; and walking along the weary terraces, which in endless succession swept far into the interior, and then only rose in diminutive heights of, maybe, 500 feet, I recalled to memory the like melancholy aspect of the arctic shores of Asia, as described by Baron Wrangell.

The broken and rugged nature of the floes obliged us to keep creeping along the coast-line, whilst our ignorance of the land ahead, its trend or direction, occasioned, together with the endless thick weather that we had until the 14th May, many a weary mile to be trodden over, which a knowledge of the bays or indentations would have saved us. It was under such unprofitable labour

that the sterling value of our men the more conspicuously showed itself. Captain Ommanney, myself, and Mr Webb, of the Pioneer (who sooner than be left behind had voluntarily taken his place as one of the sledge-crew), were the only three officers; we were consequently thrown much into the society of the men, and I feel assured I am not singular in saying that that intercourse served much to raise our opinion of the character and indomitable spirit of our seamen and marines. On them fell the hard labour, to us fell the honours of the enterprise, and to our chief the reward; yet none excelled the men in cheerfulness and sanguine hopefulness of a successful issue to our enterprise, without which, of course, energy would soon have flagged. Gallant fellows! they met our commiseration with a smile, and a vow that they could do far more. They spoke of cold as "Jack Frost," a real tangible foe, with whom they could combat and whom they would master. Hunger was met with a laugh and a chuckle at some future feast, or jolly recollections, told in rough terms, of bygone good cheer; and often, standing on some neighbouring pile of ice, and scanning the horizon for those we sought, have I heard a rough voice encouraging the sledge-crew by saying, "Keep step, boys! keep step! she (the sledge) is coming along almost by herself: there's the Erebus's masts showing over the point ahead! Keep step, boys! keep step!"

We had our moments of pleasure too,—plenty of them, in spite of the cold, in spite of fatigue. There were honest congratulations after a good day's work; there was the time after the pemmican had been eaten,

and each one, drawing up his blanket-bag around his chin, sat, pannikin in hand, and received from the cook the half-gill of grog; and, after drinking it, there was sometimes an hour's conversation, in which there was more hearty merriment, I trow, than in many a palace,—dry witticisms, or caustic remarks, which made one's sides ache with laughter. An old marine, mayhap, telling a giddy lamby of a seaman to take his advice, and never to be more than a simple sailor; for, as he philosophically argued, "Whilst you're that, do you see, you have to think of nothing: there are petty officers, officers, captains, and admirals paid for looking after you, and taking care of you!" or perhaps some scamp, with mock solemnity, wondering whether his mother was thinking of him, and whether she would cry if he never returned to England; on which a six-foot marine remarks, that, "thank God, he has got no friends; and there would only be two people in England to cry about him,—the captain of his company, who liked him because he was the tallest man in it, and the canteen sergeant, whom he had forgot to pay for some beer." Now a joke about our flags and mottoes, which one vowed to be mere jack-acting; then a learned disquisition on raising the devil, which one of the party declared he had seen done, one Sunday afternoon, in Yorkshire, for the purpose of borrowing some cash to play skittles with. In fact, our men contrived even here to throw care to the winds; and, tired as we were, sleep often overtook us still laughing at Jack's witticisms: and then such dreams! they seemed as if an angel had sent them to reward us for the hard realities

of the day. We revelled in a sweet elysium; home was around us—friends, kind, good friends; plenty smiled on every side; we ate, drank, and were merry; we visited old scenes with bygone shipmates; even those who had long gone to that bourne whence traveller returneth not, came back to cheer our sleeping hours; and many a one nigh forgot amongst the uphill struggles of life, returned to gladden us with their smiles: and as we awoke to the morning meal, many a regret would be heard that so pleasant a delusion as the night had been spent in should be dispelled. Each succeeding night, however, brought again "the cherub that watcheth over poor Jack," to throw sunny thoughts around the mind, and thus relieve our wayworn bodies.

On the 14th of May the Reliance and True Blue sledges reached a wide break in the continuation of the land, looking like a channel, and some heights to the S.W. appeared to mark the opposite shore of a channel full twenty-five miles wide. Captain Ommanney and myself ascended an elevated mass of table-land, and looked upon the widespread wintry scene. Landward, to the south, and far over the rugged and frozen sea, all was deathlike and silent as the grave: we felt we might have been the first since "creation's morn" to have looked upon it; the very hills were still clothed in their winter's livery, and the eye could not detect the line of demarcation between land and sea. The frozen foot-prints of a musk-ox excited our curiosity, as being the first and only ones we had seen, and, together with like traces of reindeer a short distance from Cape Walker, was the sum total of the realisation of all our once rosy

anticipations of beef and venison to be found during the sledge journey.

Ptarmigan, in small numbers, were occasionally seen, and about four brace shot; and now and then a stray fox was espied, watching us; their tracks, however, showed them to be pretty plentiful. Traces of hares were very numerous, but none were fallen in with by our sportsmen, except at Cape Walker, where many were seen by later visitors, and several shot. Indeed it appeared as if we had reached the limit, in this direction, of animal life; the polar bears, and, *ergo*, the seals, not showing themselves west of the same headland in our route.

On the 17th May the Reliance and True Blue parted company, each having provisions left to enable them to advance for a farther period of five days, Captain Ommanney allowing me to take the search up in a westerly direction, whilst he went down the channel to the southward, which, after all, ended in a blind bay. I went some distance farther, and, finding the coast trend to the south, endeavoured to march in a westerly direction across the frozen pack. The sledge was light, with only ten days' provision, and the men were well inured to their work; but I soon saw, from the severe strains which were brought on the fastenings of the sledge, that wood, iron, and lashings would not long stand it; and at last, as at every foot we advanced progress became more laborious and risk greater, I desisted in the attempt; for, situated as we were, nigh three hundred miles from our ship, the breaking-down of the sledge would have entailed fearful misery, if not destruction, to my party.

Turning southward, we again closed the land, when another severe storm, on the 21st of May, obliged us to take shelter in our tent, and remain there until it was time to return.

The journey homeward was light work: the sledges were now half emptied; the weather had become mild, being only a little below freezing-point: we knew the ground, and could make short cuts, and by forced marches we succeeded in making two days' journey in one, thereby giving ourselves a double quantity of food to consume. Lost flesh was quickly recovered; and the two sledges, again rejoining, reached by the night of the 4th of June a depot formed at Snow-blind Bay.

Here we met Lieutenant Mecham from the ships. He informed us that neither by our parties nor those of Penny's had intelligence of Franklin as yet been brought back by the supporting sledges. There was, however, hope yet: the long parties had not yet come in; and Captain Penny had been stopped by *water—open water*—early in May. He had again gone out with a boat; and all attention was directed to Wellington Channel, for every one now fancied that on no other route was there a chance of Franklin being heard of.

Whilst Captain Ommanney went to Cape Walker for some magnetic observations, we pulled foot straight across the floe for Griffith Island. Every hour wasted in the return journey was a crime, we felt, towards those whom we had come here to save. The fast-increasing heat told that the open season was at hand: and even if we could not get our ship to the water, we had brought out a number of beautiful boats, built ex-

pressly at a great expense. Our foot journeys in the spring had been new and successful; what might we not yet expect from boat expeditions when the floes were in motion?

On reaching that part of Barrow Strait which was evidently covered with only one season's ice, of about three feet in thickness, symptoms of a speedy disruption were very apparent. Long narrow cracks extended continuously for miles; the snow from the surface had all melted, and, running through, served to render the ice-fields porous and spongy. The joyful signs hurried us on, though not without suffering from the lack of pure snow with which to procure water for drinking. At last Griffith Island rose above the horizon. A five-and-twenty-mile march brought us to it, and another heavy drag through the melting snow carried us to our ships, on the 12th June, after an absence of fifty-eight days. We were punished for our last forced march by having five out of the sledge-crew laid up with another severe attack of snow-blindness.

Eight-and-forty hours afterwards Captain Ommanney arrived. He had crossed some of the cracks I observed in the floe with difficulty, aided by a bridge of boarding-pikes; and Lieutenant Mecham, with the sledge Russell, coming from Cape Walker on the 17th of June, was obliged to desert his sledge, and wade through water and sludge to Griffith Island, and thence to the ships; showing how remarkably the breaking-up of the ice in Barrow Strait promised to coincide in date with the time it was first seen to be in motion by Sir E. Parry's squadron in 1820.

All the parties were now in, except three sledges and twenty-one men, towards Melville Island. The supports in that direction had suffered in about the same ratio as ourselves to the southward; the progress, however, as might be expected, where the coast-line was known, was more rapid. The total number of accidents from frost-bites amounted to eighteen, and amongst them were several cases in which portions of injured feet had to be amputated. Only one man had died, John Malcolm, a seaman of the Resolute. He, poor fellow, appears to have been delicate from the outset, having fainted on his road to the place of inspection and departure in April 1851.

After an absence of sixty-two days, Lieutenant Aldrich, with the Lady Franklin sledge, arrived from Byam Martin Channel. He had searched the west coast of Bathurst Island, which trended a little westerly of north, until in latitude 76° 15′ N. At that point the channel was still full twenty miles wide between Bathurst and Melville Islands, and extended northward as far as could be seen. The only things of note observed by him were reindeer, in the month of *April*, on Bathurst Island; and with the temperature at 60° below freezing-point, they were feeding on moss or lichens. This point placed beyond doubt the fact, which is now incontestable, that the animals of the Parry group *do not migrate* to the American continent in the winter. On his way back, Aldrich fell in with large flocks of wild-fowl winging their way *northward*.

The floes around our ships were now entirely covered with the water of the melted snow. In some places it was

fully four feet in depth, and eating its way rapidly through in all directions. Lieutenant M'Clintock's sledge, the Perseverance, and the Resolute sledge, Dr Bradford's, at last hove in sight, having been out exactly eighty days. Lieutenant M'Clintock had been to Winter Harbour, and visited all the points known to Parry's squadron, such as Bushman Cove and Cape Dundas, but without any traces of Franklin. He had, however, brought a portion of Parry's last wheel used in his journey, and substantial proofs of the extraordinary abundance of animal life in that remote region, in the hides and heads of musk-oxen, the meat of which had helped to bring back his crew in wonderful condition. Eighty head of oxen and reindeer had been counted by Mr M'Clintock, and he could have shot as many as he pleased. Dr Bradford's journey was not so cheering a one. He had been early knocked up from a fall; serious symptoms threatened, and for nearly a month the gallant officer was dragged upon his sledge, carrying out, thanks to his own pluck and the zeal of his men, the object of his journey—the search of the western side of Byam Martin Channel. We were now all in: Lieutenant M'Clintock had fairly won the palm,—"palmam qui meruit ferat;" in eighty days he had travelled eight hundred miles, and heartily did all congratulate him on his success.

The day following, July 7, I and one of the officers of the Pioneer started to visit Penny's expedition. He was expected back, and we were anxious to hear his news, Captain Penny having last been reported to have reached *water* with a sound boat, a good crew, and a month's provisions. Landing at Cape Martyr, wet up to our

necks with splashing through the pools of water, nowhere less than knee deep, and often a mile in extent, we did not willingly leave the dry land again. On ascending a slope which gave us a view of the south shore of Cornwallis Island as far as Cape Hotham, and near a point known as that whence the dog-sledges in the winter used to strike off when communicating with the ships, our astonishment was great at finding the ice of Barrow Strait to have broken up. The grey light of the morning, and the perfect calm, prevented us seeing the extent of open water; but there was plenty of it, and a sea again gladdened our eyesight. Oh! it was a joyous exhilarating sight after nine months of eternal ice and snow.

The ground flew under our feet as with buoyant spirits we walked rapidly into Assistance Bay, and grasped by the hand our old friends of the Lady Franklin. We had each our tale to recount, our news to exchange, our hopes and disappointments to prose over. One thing was undoubtedly certain, that, on May 16, Captain Penny had discovered a great extent of water northward of Cornwallis Island; that this same water prevented Captain Stewart of the Sophia from passing some precipitous cliffs against which a heavy sea was beating; that this same sea was clear of all but *sea-washed* ice: and no floes were to be seen. Moreover, owing to a *southerly* breeze, which blew away to seaward the ice over which Dr Goodsir had advanced to the westward, his retreat was nearly endangered by the water obliging him with his sledge to take to the neighbouring heights; and all this *a month before anything like a*

*disruption had taken place in Barrow Strait.** This latter event, it seems, took place about the 25th of June 1851, and on the 28th June the commander of the Sophia had gone in a whale-boat from the entrance of the harbour to Wellington Channel.

Three days after our arrival at Assistance Harbour, not a particle of ice was to be seen, east or west, in Barrow Strait, except between Griffith Island and Cape Martyr, where, some ten miles from the water, and in the centre of a fixed floe, our squadron was jammed. Everywhere else a clear sea spread itself, sparkling and breaking under a fresh southerly breeze. Some individuals who had visited Cape Hotham reported the water in Wellington Channel to have made up as high as Barlow Inlet, beyond which, up to "the north water," a floe still intervened.

I was much interested in a journey upon which Mr John Stuart, surgeon of the Lady Franklin, had been despatched to follow the traces of some of Franklin's sledges towards Caswell's Tower, and to re-examine the traces found in 1850. The sledge-tracks which I have elsewhere alluded to as existing on the east side of Erebus and Terror Bay, Mr Stuart found, as we conjectured, to have been those of some exploring party sent from Beechey Island to Caswell's Tower, in Radstock Bay; for at the base of the said tower—a remarkable detached mass of limestone—two carefully-constructed cairns were

* We solved this mystery in the years 1852, '53, and '54, by wintering in Wellington Channel, and there ascertaining that the area of this open sea was after all limited to the narrows and strong tide of the channel; beyond it there existed another ice-choked sea.

found, but no record in them. Beyond this no further signs of the missing navigators were found—nothing whatever that could indicate a retreating party. That these cairns were placed to attract attention appears certain: the most conspicuous points have been chosen for them; they are well and carefully built, evidently not the mere work of an idle hour.

Failing Penny and his intelligence, I contented myself with visiting the neighbourhood of Assistance Harbour, and with observing the various phenomena connected with the dissolution of the winter ice and snow upon the land; and of these none was more interesting than the breaking-out of the ravines. These having filled with snow during the winter, had formed, during the previous fortnight, into large lakes of water, sometimes of acres in extent; and then, in one moment, the barriers which had pent up the ravines gave way, and, with irresistible force, the waters rushed over every obstacle to the sea. Three large ones broke open whilst I was in Assistance Harbour, and the thundering sound of the ice, water, and shingle which swept down, and soon cut a broad channel for many yards through the floe in the bay, was a cheering tune to the gallant fellows who were looking forward to being released from their winter imprisonment. Within twenty-four hours the body of water in these ravines would release itself, and an almost dry watercourse be left. But there could be no doubt that the action of these discharges of water from the ravines seemed to cut up into fragments the ice enclosed in the various bays and inlets of the arctic sea, and detached it from the shore, so that the final work of disruption by a

heavy swell setting in with autumnal gales might complete the annual clearance of these places. Nothing in the shape of a river seemed to exist in this island; rather a remarkable fact, considering its size, and the immense quantity of snow annually thawed in its interior valleys and plains.

A beautiful lake existed about two miles inland; and, having been discovered by one of Captain Penny's people on the anniversary of the battle of Trafalgar, was very appropriately called Trafalgar Lake. In it a small species of trout had been caught occasionally throughout the winter; and if the ice broke up early a good haul of fish was anticipated from the nets. On elevated land around the lake sorrel and scurvy-grass grew in abundance. I need hardly say we ate of it voraciously, for the appetite delighted in anything like vegetable food.

Occasionally eider and pin-tailed duck were shot, as well as a few brent-geese, but these birds appeared remarkably shy and wary, although evidently here to breed.

During the first week of my stay in Assistance Harbour, immense flights of wild-fowl were to be seen amongst the loose ice in Barrow Strait; but when the pack had dispersed, and left nothing but an open sea, the birds appeared to have gone elsewhere for food. Indeed I always observed that, at the edge of ice, more birds were invariably to be found in the arctic regions than in large or open water—a rule equally applicable to the whale, seal, and bear, all of which are to be found at the floe-edge, or in loosely packed ice.

A gale of wind from the southward occurred, and I was extremely anxious to see whether it would bring

over the ice from the opposite shore; for the croakers in Assistance Harbour, unable to deny the existence of water along the north shore of Barrow Strait, consoled themselves by declaring that the floe had merely formed itself into pack, and was lying along the coast of North Somerset, ready at an hour's warning to spread itself over the waters. The southerly gale, however, piped cheerily. A heavy swell and surf—oh, most pleasant sound!—beat upon the fixed ice of Assistance Harbour; yet no pack came or floe-pieces either, and thus was placed beyond all doubt the fact that, at any rate as far west as Griffith Island, Barrow Strait was clear of ice. In an angle formed between Leopold Island and North Somerset there was evidently a pack; for an ice-blink, which moved daily about in that direction, showed that the mass was acted upon by the winds, and at last the southerly wind drove it up into Wellington Channel. To be condemned to inactivity with such a body of water close at hand was painful; and trying as had been many disappointments we experienced in the arctic regions, there was none that pained us more than the ill-luck which had consigned our squadron and its 180 men to inactivity in an icy prison under Griffith Island.

It was now we felt the full evil result of our winter quarters. Boats could not be despatched, because the ships might at any time in July have been swept by the ice whither it pleased, and the junction of boats and ships rendered uncertain. Future expeditions will, however, hit this nail on the head, and three distinct periods for arctic exploration will be found to exist—viz., The spring, from April to June 25, for foot journeys; from

June 25 to the first week in August, for boat expeditions; and then six weeks (for steam vessels) of navigable season.

Unable to remain with satisfaction away from our squadron, to be daily tantalised with looking at a sea which might as well not have existed for us, we returned to the Pioneer, calling the attention of the officers of Penny's squadron to the possibility of a vessel from England, sent to communicate with the squadrons, actually running past us all, mayhap, without detecting our winter quarters. A large cairn was therefore afterwards erected upon the low land, in such a position as to attract the attention of a craft bound westward.

On our return to the naval squadron, we found them still seven miles from the water. Towards the westward, looking from the top of the island, on the 25th of July, all was water and water sky. About Somerville Island and Brown Island, a patch of fixed ice, similar to that we were in, connected itself with the Cornwallis Island shore; but between that and us the water was fast making—indeed, it every day became apparent that we should be released from the *northward*, and not from the southward. One officer saw Lowther Island in a sea of water; and thus early, if not earlier, I had the firmest conviction on my mind that a ship might have been carried in a lead of water, very similar to that Parry found in 1829, into Winter Harbour, Melville Island; or what, in view of my object, would have been more desirable, up to the north-west by Byam Martin Channel.

Griffith Island had, by 25th July, put on its gayest summer aspect—the ravines had emptied themselves—the snow had disappeared from the slopes—a russet

brown spread from one end of the island to the other—on its sheltered terraces, poppies, saxifrage, and sorrel in full flower intermingled with lichens and mosses of every hue and description; and we, poor mortals, congratulated ourselves upon verdure, which was only charming by comparison. The great body of melted snow that had been on top of the floe had now nearly all escaped through it in numerous fissures and holes, and they were rapidly connecting themselves one with the other. Canals, which had been formed in the floe for the purpose of enabling the squadron to get out should the water make exactly in the same way it did last year, now spread snake-like over the floe; and the water of Barrow Strait had approached to within a distance of four miles. Thus closed the month of July, with the additional disappointing intelligence that Penny, who returned to Assistance Harbour on the 25th, had not been able, owing to the constant prevalence of contrary winds setting in from the N.W., and his want of provisions, to make much progress in Wellington Channel. Indeed, he had, from all accounts, found his boat but ill adapted to contend with the strong breezes, heavy sea, and rapid tides into which he had launched between the islands north of Cornwallis Island, and never succeeded in obtaining a desirable offing. The islands, however, were thoroughly searched for traces: a small piece of fresh English elm was found on one of them, which Penny believed to have been thrown overboard from the Erebus and Terror; also a bit of charred pine, which Sir John Richardson believes to have been burnt by a party belonging to the same ships. But the most im-

portant result of Penny's efforts was the verification of the existence of a great body of open water north-west and beyond the barrier of ice which still existed in Wellington Channel.*

I will not describe days of hard labour, in which we cut to the southward into the ice, whilst the water was trying hard to get to us from the north. It eventually caught us, and (Saturday, August 8) we were all afloat in open water, with a barrier of ice *still southward towards Barrow Strait.* The Intrepid had been sent early in the week to look round the north end of Griffith Island, and reported a narrow neck of ice from the N.W. bluffs towards Somerville Island. Eastward and not westward was, however, to be our course, and we therefore remained where we were. On the 9th and 10th a general disruption of the little remaining ice took place; and at last, on August 11, the ice, as if heartily tired of us, shot us out into Barrow Strait, by turning itself fairly round on a pivot. We were at sea again, and the navigable season was proclaimed to have commenced.

Taking, like another Sinbad, our old Resolute burden behind us, the Pioneer steamed away for Assistance Harbour, from whence, as we had been given to understand some days previously, Jones Sound was to be our destination; a plan to which I the more gladly submitted, as I felt confident, from all I had heard and seen of its geography or of that of the neighbouring land, that it

* We now know, by the discovery of Franklin's record on King William's Land, that he did sail up Wellington Channel in '45-46 as far as lat. 78° N., and then returned into Barrow Strait by a new channel between Cornwallis and Bathurst Islands.

would be found to connect itself with Penny's North Water: once in it, we felt failure of our object to be impossible; we had still three years' provisions, and nearly four years' of many things. One man had died, perhaps half-a-dozen more were invalids, but the rest were strong and hearty. To be sure, we all lacked much of that sanguineness which had animated us hitherto. Repeated disappointment, long journeys over regions which had shown no trace of those we had hoped to rescue, had all combined to damp our feelings.

The morning fog broke, and a day, beautiful, serene, and sunny, welcomed us into Assistance Harbour, which we found just clear of ice; and the Lady Franklin, Sophia, and Felix, with anchors down, riding all ready for sea. As we towed the Resolute up to her anchorage, Captain Penny pulled past in his gig, evidently going to make an official visit to our leader. Directly after the Pioneer was secured I went on board the Resolute to hear the news, her first lieutenant having been in Assistance Harbour (Captain Penny's quarters) up to the moment of our arrival. I then learnt that Penny was going to volunteer to proceed up Wellington Channel, if it cleared out, in one of our steamers; and my gallant friend, the first lieutenant, spoke strongly upon the necessity of still trying to reach the North Water by the said route, whilst I maintained that, until we had visited Jones Sound, it was impossible to say whether it would not be found an easier road into the open sea seen by Captain Penny than Wellington Channel appeared to be. Captain Penny soon joined us, and there, as well as afterwards on board the Lady Franklin, I heard of

his proposal, and that it had been declined. Failing in his offer, which was for one reason not to be wondered at — insomuch that our large and efficient squadron needed no assistance either in men or material to do the work alone—Captain Penny had decided on returning home, believing that Franklin was so far to the N.W. as to be beyond his reach; and also looking to the tenor of his instructions, which strictly enjoined him to return to England in 1852.

Next morning, by four o'clock, we were all bound to the eastward. A few amongst us still hoped, by Jones Sound, to reach that water of whose existence, at any rate, we had no longer any doubt, whatever might be its difficulty of access. Off Cape Hotham we found a loose pack; it extended about half-way across Wellington Channel, and then a clear sea spread itself eastward and northward along the shores of North Devon to Cape Bowden. From a strong ice-blink up Wellington Channel there was reason to think the barrier* still athwart it; we did not, however, go to ascertain whether it was so, but, favoured by a fair wind, steamed, sailed, and towed the Resolute as fast as possible past Beechey Island. The form of sending letters to England had been duly enacted, but I was in no humour to write;

* Had we but happily known at that time of the perfect disruption of the Wellington Channel ice subsequent to our passage across in 1850, as shown by the track of the American Expedition and Lieutenant de Haven's admirable report, we should not have fallen into the error of believing *barriers* of ice to be permanent in deep-water channels—a fallacy which it is to be hoped has exploded with many other misconceptions as to the fixed nature of ice, and the constant accumulation of it in polar regions.

the news would be unsatisfactory; and, unless Jones Sound was open, there was a moral certainty of all being in England within a short time of one another.

And so it proved. Leaving the Assistance and Resolute to join us off Cape Dudley Digges, the steamers proceeded, under Captain Austin, with three months' provisions, on the night of the 14th of August for Jones Sound.

Next morning brought the steamers close in with the shore between Capes Horsburgh and Osborn, along which we steered towards Jones Sound. Glacier and iceberg again abounded, and the comparatively tame scenery of Barrow Strait was again changed for the bold and picturesque mountains and headlands of Baffin Bay. As the evening of the 15th drew in, Jones Sound gradually opened itself in the head of Coburg Bay, and, in spite of a strong head-wind, we commenced working up into it under sail and steam. During the night, Cape Leopold proved to be an island, dividing the sound into two entrances; and the exhilarating effect of a fine broad expanse of water leading to the westward, up which we were thrashing under a press of canvass, was only marred by the unpleasant fact that we had parted from the ships containing our main stock of provisions, and we were thus without the means of following up any traces, should we be happy enough to discover them, of the poor missing expedition.

"*Saturday, August* 16, 1851.—The sound is evidently narrowest about the entrance; from a point to the N.W. of us it evidently increases in width. Loose patches of ice are occasionally met with, and the tides seem some-

what strong, judging by the set of the vessel. The scenery is magnificent, especially on the south shore, where, some ten miles in the interior, a huge dome of pure white snow envelops land some 3000 or 4000 feet high, which Captain Austin has named the Trenter Mountains, in compliment to the family of Sir John Barrow (that being the maiden name of the Dowager Lady Barrow). From this dome long winding glaciers pour down the valleys, and project, through the ravines, into the deep blue waters of this magnificent strait. Northward of us the land is peculiarly lofty table-land, having here and there a sudden dip, or thrown up in a semi-peak. The draught of the wind has blown constantly down the strait." Such are my rough notes made during the day, as the Pioneer and Intrepid worked to the westward; but as evening drew on, the increasing smoothness of the water, and a hard icy blink to the west, prepared us for a report which came from the mast-head about midnight, that there was very much ice to windward of us.

Next day, 17th, after a fog which caused some delay had cleared off, the disagreeable truth revealed itself. From a little beyond a conical-shaped island on the north shore, the sound was still barred with floes, although at this point it increased at least twelve miles more in breadth. Going up to the floe-edge, the steamers crossed to the S.W., following the ice carefully along until it impinged upon the southern shore. The night was beautifully serene and clear; and, as if to add to our regret, four points and a half of the compass, or 54° of bearing, to the westward, showed no symptom of land.

The northern side of the sound trended away to the west, preserving its lofty and marked character; whilst on the south the land ended abruptly some fifteen miles farther on, and then, beyond a small break, one of those wedge-shaped hills peculiar to the limestone lands of Barrow Strait showed itself at a great distance; and the natural suggestion to my own mind was, that the opening between the said wedge-shaped hill and the land on our southern hand would have been found to connect itself with the deep fiords running to the northward from Croker Bay, in Lancaster Sound. As to the direction of Jones Sound, whose frozen surface forbade us to advance with our vessels, I was, from what I saw, fully willing to believe in the report of my ice-quartermaster, Robert Moore, a clever, observant seaman, as the annexed report will show:—

"Sir,—It was in 1848 that I was with Captain Lee in the Prince of Wales, when we ran up Jones Sound. The wind was from the S.S.E. compass (*E.N.E. true*), thick weather, with a strong breeze. We steered up Jones Sound, N.E. by compass (*westwardly true*), for fourteen hours, when, seeing some ice aground, we hauled to.

"The next day, being fine weather, we proceeded farther up, and seeing no ice or whales, a boat was sent on shore. She, returning, reported not having seen anything but *very high land* and *deep water close to* rocks on the south shore.

"We tacked ship, and stood to the N.E. compass (*N.W. true*); saw some ice aground on a sand-bank,

with only six feet water on it at low water; but standing on to the N.E. compass (*N.W. true*), found deep water from five to eight miles across from the sand to the north shore. When past the sand, open water as far as we could see from the mast-head, and extending from about *N.E. to N.N.W. compass* (N.W. to W.S.W. true). We then returned, being fine and clear, and could not see what we were in search of (whales).

"Leaving the north land (a long low point, running up to a *table-top mountain*), *we came across to the south side, which was bold land right out of the sound.*

"We saw the *Pinnacle Rocks at the end of that sound* (*Princess Charlotte's Monument*); and *this and the low land between that sound* and *Lancaster Sound*, as we were running to the S.E., makes me confident is the same place which we were up in the Pioneer.

"The distance we ran up the sound in the Prince of Wales, I think, to the best of my judgment, was about a hundred and fifty or sixty miles, &c.

(Signed) "ROBERT MOORE,
"*Ice-quartermaster, H.M.S. Pioneer.*

"To Lieut. SHERARD OSBORN."

The italics in the above letter serve to show how well these observations of my quartermaster agreed with the sound we were up; and taking this, together with the description of the land seen by Captain Stewart and Dr Sutherland during their late journey up the eastern side of Wellington Channel, I believe that a very narrow intervening belt of low land divides Jones Sound from Baring Bay, in Wellington Channel, and that, turning

to the northward, this sound eventually opens into the same great polar sea which washes the northern shores of the Parry group.*

Unable to advance, we returned upon our wake to the conical island on the north side of the sound; and a boat, with two officers in it, was sent to erect a cairn. They returned next morning, having found, what interested me very much, numerous Esquimaux traces, though of very ancient date, and had shot several birds—a seasonable increase to our stock for table consumption. One of the sportsmen assured me that, in spite of the increased number of glaciers around us, and other appearances of as severe climate as that we had endured in Barrow Strait, he was of opinion that there was much more vegetation in our neighbourhood than in the more southern latitude of Cornwallis Island. The specimens of plants brought off in the boat, such as poppies, saxifrage, and moss, were all finer than we had seen elsewhere; and reindeer-horns near the Esquimaux ruins, showed that these animals had at one time abounded.

The island was a mass of grey-coloured granite, with some dark masses of ferruginous-coloured rock intermixed, the whole much broken and rent by the agency of frost and water.

Monday, the 18th of August, we proceeded along the northern shore, towards the other entrance which had shown itself on the north side of Leopold Island—the Jones Sound of the old charts—which we now proved not to be blocked up by either land or glaciers.

* This opinion was afterwards found to be strictly accurate during our explorations of 1852-53 in Wellington Channel.

The land about Cape Hardwicke was little else, in my opinion, than a group of islands—an impression in which I became the more confirmed when the ice obliged us to strike off directly to the eastward; and Cape Clarence stood out bold and clear, with a midnight sun behind it; and the light streamed through the different ice-choked channels between Capes Hardwicke and Clarence, throwing up the land, *where there was land*, in strong and dark relief.

Beyond Cape Clarence I saw no symptom of land, nor did any one else either. It is said to recede—very possibly it may; but as neither we nor the Resolute and Assistance (who all reached a higher latitude than any discovery-ships had done since Baffin's memorable voyage) ever saw land north of Cape Clarence, I trust, for the sake of geography, that the beautifully indented line which now joins the land about Smith Sound to that of Clarence Head, in our charts, may be altered into a dotted one, as denoting that the said coast exists solely in the imagination of channel-closing voyagers.

A multitude of grounded icebergs warned us of a shoal which appears to bar the northern entrance to Jones Sound; and, during the night, a sudden gale from the north, together with spring-tides, set them all floating and dancing around us in a very exciting style. Edging constantly along large floe-pieces, we were eventually carried next day into the packed ice, through which our way had to be found under double-reefed sails, the two pretty screw-schooners thrashing away in gallant style, until a dead calm again left us to steam our best; indeed all night of the 19th was a constant heavy tussle with

packed ice and frost, in which the old floe-pieces were being glued together by young ice varying from two to five inches in thickness. Patches of water, perhaps each an acre in extent, were to be seen from the crow's-nest, and from one to the other of these we had to work our way. By-and-by the Cary Isles showed themselves to the northward, and then the flat-topped land between Cape York and Dudley Digges.

Our last hope of doing any service this season now rested in the expectation that "open water" would be found along the north-east side of Baffin Bay; but this expectation was damped by the disagreeable knowledge that our provisions on board the steamers were too scanty to allow us to follow up any opening we should have found.

On the afternoon of the 28th of August a strong water-sky and heavy bank showed the sea to be close at hand to the south. We rattled on for Wolstenholme Island, reached under its lee by the evening, and edged away to the north, quickly opening out Cape Stair, and finding it to be an island, as the Cape York Esquimaux on board the Assistance had led us to believe. Passing some striking-looking land, which, although like that of the more southern parts of Greenland, was bold and precipitous, intersected with deep valleys, yet comparatively free from glaciers, we saw the Booth Sound of Sir John Ross, and shortly afterwards sighted what proved afterwards to be the southern bluff of Whale Sound. We could not approach it, however; and choosing an iceberg, we anchored our steamers to it to await an opening.

On Thursday, the 21st of August, I started in a boat

with Mr M'Dougal, to see if we could get as far as Whale Sound. The bay-ice, in which we could neither pull nor sail, whilst it was too thin to stand upon, or track the boat through, materially checked our progress. By the afternoon we reached a close pack-edge which defied farther progress; but, on landing, we found ourselves to be at the entrance of a magnificent inlet, still filled with ice, which extended to the eastward for some fifteen miles, having in its centre a peculiarly-shaped rock, which the seamen immediately christened "Prince Albert's Hat," from its resemblance to a marine's shako. The numerous traces of Esquimaux were perfectly startling; their tent-places, winter abodes, *caches*, and graves, covered every prominent point about us. Of what date they were, it was impossible, as I have elsewhere said, to form a correct idea. The enamel was still perfect on the bones of the seals which strewed the rocks, the flesh of which had been used for food. On opening one of the graves, I found the skeleton of an old man, with a good deal of the cartilage adhering to the bones, and on the skull there were still symptoms of decaying flesh; nothing else, however, was seen to denote a recent visit of these interesting denizens of the north. Each *cache*, or rather circle of stones, had a flat slab for a cover, with a cairn near it, or else an upright mass of stone, to denote its position; and some of the graves were constructed with a degree of care and labour worthy of a more civilised people. Several had huge slabs of stone on the top, which it must have required a great many men to lift, and some ingenuity to secure.

Scurvy-grass in great abundance, as well as another

antiscorbutic plant, bearing a small white flower, was found wherever we landed; and I likewise observed London-pride, poppies, sorrel, dwarf willow, crow-foot grass, saxifrage, and *tripe-de-roche*, besides plenty of turf, which, with very little trouble, would have served for fuel—and this in latitude 76° 52′ N. Large flocks of geese and ducks were flying about; the great northern diver passed overhead, and uttered its shrill warning cry to its mate; and loons, dovekies, and plalaropes, in small numbers, gave occasional exercise for our guns.

The coast was all of granitic formation; and if one might judge from the specimens of iron pyrites and copper ore found here and there, the existence of minerals in large quantities, as is the case about Uppernavik, may be taken for granted.

The 22d, 23d, 24th, and 25th of August passed without a favourable change taking place; indeed, by this time our retreat, as well as advance, had been barred by the packed-ice. Pressed up from Baffin Bay by the southerly gales of this season of the year, the broken floes seemed to be seeking some outlet by the North-West or North-East. The winter was fast setting in, temperature falling thus early, and the animal life every day more scarce.

About one o'clock on the morning of the 26th August, I was aroused and told that Esquimaux were coming off on dog-sledges. All hands turned out to witness the arrival of our visitors. They were five in number, each man having a single sledge. As they approached they uttered an expression very like Tima! or rather Timouh! accompanied by a loud, hoarse laugh. Some of our crew

answered them, and then they appeared delighted, laughing most immoderately.

The sledges were entirely constructed of bone, and were small, neat-looking vehicles. No sledge had more than five dogs; some had only three. The dogs were fine-looking, wolfish animals, and either white or tan-colour. The well-fed appearance of the natives astonished us all. Without being tall, averaging about 5 ft. 5 in., they were brawny-looking fellows, deep-chested, and large-limbed, with Tartar beards and mustaches, and a breadth of shoulder which denoted more than ordinary strength. Their clothing consisted of a dressed seal-skin frock, with a hood which served for a cap when it was too cold to trust to a thick head of jet-black hair for warmth. A pair of bear-skin trousers reached to the knee, and, with walrus-hide boots, completed their attire. Knowing how perfectly isolated these people were from the rest of the world—indeed, they are said with some degree of probability to have believed themselves to be the only people in the world—I was not a little delighted to see how well necessity had taught them to clothe themselves; and the skill of their women was apparent in the sewing, and in one case tasteful ornamental work, of their habiliments.

I need hardly say we loaded them with presents. Their ecstasy exceeded all bounds when each was presented with a boathook-staff, a piece of wood some twelve feet long. They danced, shouted, and laughed again with astonishment at possessing such a prize. Wood was evidently with them a scarce article; they had it not even to construct sledges with. York, the interpreter, had before told us

they had no canoes for want of it; and they seemed perfectly incapable of understanding that our ships and masts were altogether made of wood. The intelligence shown by these people was very gratifying; and from having evidently been kindly treated on board the North Star, during her sojourn in this neighbourhood, they were confident of good treatment, and went about fearlessly. On seeing a gun they laughed, and said "Pooh! pooh!" to imitate its sound. It was a far from complimentary term to apply to the man-of-war's-man's great arm of offence and defence. One man danced, and was evidently anxious to repeat some nautical shuffling of the feet to the time of a fiddle, of which he had agreeable recollections, whilst another described how we slept in hammocks. After some time a document was given them, to show to any ship they might visit hereafter; and they were sent away in high spirits. The course they had taken, both coming and going, proved them to be from Wolstenholme Sound; and, as well as we could understand, they had lately been to the northward, looking for *pousseys*—seals; and no doubt they were the natives whose recent traces had been seen by us near Booth Inlet.

August 26, 1851.—Beset against a floe, which is in motion, owing to the pressure of bergs upon its southern face; and as it slowly *coachwheels* (as the whalers term it) round upon an iceberg to seaward of us, we employ ourselves heaving clear of the danger. A gale fast rising, and things looking very ugly. The Intrepid, who had changed her berth from the "in-shore" to the "off-shore" side of the Pioneer, through some accident of ice-anchors

slipping, was caught between the floe and the iceberg, and in a minute inextricably, as far as human power was concerned, surrounded with ice; and as the floe, acted upon by the pressure of the gale, forced more and more upon the berg, we were glad, yet astonished, to see the vessel rise up the inclined plane formed by the tongue of the iceberg under her bottom. Had she not done so she must have sunk. Sending a portion of our crew to her aid, to keep launching the Intrepid's boats ahead during the night, we watched with anxiety the fast-moving floes and icebergs around us. A wilder scene it would be impossible to conceive. Our forced inactivity—for escape or reciprocal help was impossible—rendered it the more trying.

Lieutenant John B. Cator has himself told the trials to which the Intrepid's qualities were subjected that night and day—how she was pushed up the iceberg high and dry, and how the "bonnie screw" came down again right and tight. The Pioneer meanwhile drifted away, cradled in floe-pieces, and perfectly helpless, shaving past icebergs, in close proximity, but safely, until the gale as suddenly abated, and we found ourselves some six miles north of the Intrepid, and off the sound, which, for want of a name, we will call "Hat Sound." Steaming and sailing up a lead of water back towards our consort, we soon saw that she was all right and afloat again, though beset in the pack. We therefore took advantage of an opening in the ice to run back again to the northward alone. About midnight, the Whale Sound of Baffin being then open to our view, but filled with broken ice, and our farther progress impeded by the

pack, we again made fast at this, the farthest northern latitude reached by any of our squadron—viz., 77° north latitude.

Friday, August 29.—Finding progress in this direction hopeless, we rejoined the Intrepid as close as the ice would allow us, and learnt that she had injured her rudder and screw-framing. It was now decided to rejoin the Resolute and Assistance at their rendezvous off Cape Dudley Digges, as the winter snow was fast covering the land, and pancake-ice forming on the sea.

The 30th and 31st the Pioneer made fruitless attempts to reach the Intrepid. The leads of water were evidently separating us more and more. She was working in for Wolstenholme Sound, whilst we were obliged to edge to the westward.

September 1, 1851, came in on us. From the crow's-nest one interminable barrier of ice spread itself around; and as the imprisonment of our vessels would have entailed starvation, it was necessary to make a push, and endeavour, by one of us at any rate reaching supplies, to secure the means of rescue to both.

A lucky slackening of the ice encouraged us to enter the pack, and we entered it. It was a long and a tough struggle, sometimes for an hour not making a ship's length of headway, then bursting into a crack of water, which seemed an ocean by comparison. Screwing and heaving, my gallant crew working like Britons, now over the stern, booming off pieces from the screw as she went astern for a fresh rush at some obstinate bar; now over the bows, coaxing her sharp stem into the crack which had to be wedged open until the hull could

pass; now leaping from piece to piece of the broken ice, clearing the lines, resetting the anchors, then rushing for the ladders, as the vessel cleared the obstacles, to prevent being left behind. Light-hearted, obedient, and zealous, if my heartfelt admiration of them could have lightened their labours, I should have been glad indeed. Late in the evening the Intrepid was seen working inside of Wolstenholme Island. We made fast to a lofty iceberg, to obtain a good view for the most promising lead of water; and the experienced eye of a quartermaster, Joseph Organ, enabled him to detect the glisten of open water on the horizon to the westward. For it we accordingly struck through the pack. Never were screw and steam more taxed. To stop was to be beset for the winter, and be starved and drifted heaven knows where. An iron stem and a good engine did the work —I will not bore the non-professional reader how. A little before midnight the Resolute and Assistance were seen, and by four o'clock on the morning of the 2d September we were alongside of them. Shortly afterwards our amateurs and visitors left us, and the three vessels cruised about, waiting for the Intrepid, it being generally understood that when she rejoined the squadron we were to return to England.

We learnt that the sailing ships had been in open water as high as the Cary Islands: *they had seen no land on the west side north of Cape Clarence.* On Cary Islands they had found traces of the remote visits of whalers, and had shot immense numbers (about 700) of birds, loons especially. On one occasion they had been placed in trying circumstances by a gale from the south-

ward amongst the packed ice, the extraordinary disappearance of which to the northward was only to be accounted for by supposing the ice of Baffin Bay to have been blown through Smith Sound into the Polar Sea, a small gateway for so much ice to escape by. The disappearance of the ice, however, which a fortnight earlier had spread over the whole sea between the arctic highlands and Jones Sound, under the influence of southerly gales, confirmed me the more strongly in my belief that the north-west portion of Baffin Bay is open, and forms no *cul-de-sac* there any more than it does in Jones Sound, Lancaster Sound, or Ponds Bay.

From Hudson Strait, in latitude 60° N., to Jones Sound, in latitude 76° N., a distance of 960 miles, we find on the western hand a mass of islands of every conceivable shape and size, with long and tortuous channels intersecting the land in every direction; yet vain men, anxious to put barriers in the way of future navigators, draw large continents where no one has dared to penetrate, and block up natural outlets without cause or reason.

I will now, with the reader's permission, carry him back to a subject that here and there has been cursorily alluded to throughout these pages—the Esquimaux traces and ruins everywhere found by us, and the extraordinary chain of evidence which, commencing in Melville Island, our farthest west, carries us, link by link, to the isolated inhabitants of North Greenland, yclept arctic highlanders, by that erratic but able navigator Sir John Ross.

Strange and ancient signs were found by us in almost

every sheltered nook on the seaboard of this sad and solitary land—signs indubitably of a race having once existed, which had either decayed away, or else, more probably, migrated to more hospitable portions of the arctic zone. That all these traces were those of the houses, caches, hunting-posts, and graves of the Esquimaux or Innuit, there could be in our minds no doubt; and looking to the immense extent of land over which this extraordinary race of fishermen are to be found, well might it be said, that they are "one of the most widely spread nations of the globe."

The seat of this race might be placed in Northern Asia, for on the dreary banks of the Lena and Indigirka, along the whole extent of the frozen *tundra* which faces the Polar Sea, and in the distant isles of New Siberia, rarely visited by even the bold seekers of fossil ivory, the same ruined circles of stone, betokening the former abode of human beings, the same whalebone rafters, the same stone axes, the same implements of the chase, are to be found, as to this day are used, and only used, by the Tchuktches of Behring Strait, the Innuit of North America, or the Esquimaux of Hudson Strait and Greenland—a people identical in language (of which they all speak different dialects), habits, and disposition.

Supposing then that, from the east of Asia, these people first migrated to the American continent, and thence eventually wandered to the eastern shores of Greenland, it became an interesting question how the lands upon our northern hand in our passage up Barrow Strait should bear such numerous marks of human location, whereas upon the southern side they were comparatively

scarce; and again, how the natives residing in the northern portion of Baffin Bay should have been ignorant that their brethren dwelt in great numbers southward of the glaciers of Melville Bay.

Some amongst us—and I was of this number—objected to the theory summarily advanced, that at a remote period these northern lands had been peopled from the south, and that the population had perished or wasted away from increased severity of climate, or diminution of the means of subsistence. Our objections were argued on the following grounds: If the Parry group had been colonised from the American continent, that continent, their nursery, would have shown signs of a large population at points immediately in juxtaposition, which it does not do.

From the estuary of the Coppermine to the Great Fish River, the Esquimaux traces are less numerous than on the north shore of Barrow Strait. To assert that the Esquimaux have travelled from the American continent to the bleak shores of Bathurst Island, is to suppose a savage capable of voluntarily quitting a land of plenty for one of gaunt famine: on the other hand, it seems unreasonable to attribute these signs of a bygone people's existence to some convulsion of nature, or some sudden increase of cold, since no similar catastrophe had occurred in any other part of the world. Contrary to such opinions, we opined that the traces were those of a vast and prolonged emigration, and that it could be shown, on very fair premises, that a large number of the Innuit, Skræling, or Esquimaux—call them what you please—had travelled from Asia to the eastward, along a much

higher parallel of latitude than the American continent, and, in their very natural search for the most hospitable region, had gone from the *north towards the south, not from the south towards the north*, or, what may yet one day be laid open to the world, reached a high northern latitude, in which a deep and uncongealable sea gives rise to a milder climate, and an increased amount of the capabilities of subsistence.

I will sketch the probable route of the Esquimaux emigration as I believe it to have taken place in the north-east of Asia. The Tchuktches, the only independent tribe in Siberia, are seen to assume, amongst that portion of them residing on the sea-coast, habits closely analogous to those of the Esquimaux. The hunters of Siberia tell how a similar race, the Omoki, "whose hearths were once more numerous on the banks of the Lena than the stars of an arctic night," are gone, none know whither. The natives now living in the neighbourhood of Cape Chelajskoi, in Siberia, aver that emigration to a land in the *north-east* had occurred within the memory of their fathers; and amongst other cases we find them telling Wrangell that the Onkillon tribe had once occupied that land; but being attacked by the Tchuktches, they, headed by a chief called Krachnoi, had taken shelter in the land visible northward from Cape Jakan.

This land Wrangell and others did not then believe in. British seamen have, however, proved the assertion to be a fact, and Captains Kellett and Moore have found "an extensive land" in the very direction the Siberian fishermen declared it to exist. It is not my purpose to enter into a disquisition upon the causes which brought

about this emigration. Sad and bitter necessity alone it must have been, which thrust these poor members of the human family into localities which, even in Asia, caused the Russians to exclaim, "What could have led men to forsake more favoured lands for this grave of nature?" Choice it could not have been, for, in America, we see that the Esquimaux has struggled hard to reach southern and genial climes. In the Aleutian Isles, and on the coast of Labrador, local circumstances favoured them, and the Indian hunter was unable to subsist in lands which were comparatively overflowing with subsistence for the arctic fishermen. I hold, therefore, that there has been at some remote period of time a double stream of emigration from Asia towards America and Greenland.

One body travelled in a line which skirts the southern shores of the Polar basin. The bloodthirsty races of North America obliged this human tide to confine itself purely to the sea-coast; and although vast tracts, such as the barren grounds between longitudes 99° and 109° W., are at the present day almost untenanted by Esquimaux, still a sufficient population remains to show that an emigration of these tribes had taken place there at a remote period, and in time these people reached the shores of Davis Strait and the Atlantic Ocean.

In a line parallel to them, others of their brethren who reached the land lately re-discovered northward of Behring Strait, may have likewise wandered along the Parry Group to Lancaster Sound and the head of Baffin Bay.

In order to have done this, land must be presumed to extend from the meridian of Behring Strait to Melville

Island—a point upon which few who study the geography of that region can have now a doubt; and eminent men have long supposed it to be the case, from various phenomena, such as the nature of the sea between the Mackenzie River and Behring Strait, and the appearance of very heavy ice in that direction—all indicating that a barrier lay northward of the American continent. The gallant squadron under Captains Collinson and M'Clure will, doubtless, solve this problem, and connect, either by a continent or a chain of islands, the ruined *yourts* of Cape Jakan with the time-worn stone huts of Melville Island.*

Situated as these places are under the same degree of latitude, the savage, guided by the length of his seasons, and the periodical arrival of bird and beast, would fearlessly progress along the north shore of the great strait, which may be said to extend from Lancaster Sound to the Strait of Behring. This progress was, doubtless, a work of centuries, but gradual, constant, and imperative. The seal, the reindeer, and the whale, all desert or avoid places where man or beast wages war on them whilst multiplying their species, and have to be followed, as we find to be the case with our hunters, sealers, and whalers of the present day.

* The late talented hydrographer of the navy, Admiral Sir Francis Beaufort, told me of his conviction of the existence of land northward of Behring Strait, a year before the present Admiral Kellett discovered it in the Herald. The strangely ancient and immovable character of the ice between Behring Strait and Bank's Land, encountered by Captain Collinson and Sir Robert M'Clure, all confirm me in my opinion that there is land to the northward of that ice-choked sea, from the Parry Isles to Siberia.

As the northern Esquimaux travelled to the east, offshoots from the main body no doubt struck to the southward. For instance, there is every reason to believe Boothia to have been originally peopled from the north. The natives seen there by Sir John Ross spoke of their fathers having fished and lived in more northern lands. They described the shores of North Somerset sufficiently to show that they knew that it was only by rounding Cape Bunny that Ross could carry his vessel into that western sea, from whose waters an isthmus barred him: and this knowledge, traditional as I believe it to have been, has since been proved to be correct by those who wintered in Leopold Harbour finding Esquimaux traces about that neighbourhood, and by the foot journey of Sir James Ross, in 1848, round Cape Bunny towards the magnetic pole.

In corroboration of my idea that these inhabitants of the arctic zone were once very numerous along the north shore of Barrow Strait and Lancaster Sound, the following localities were found to abound with ruins: The gulf between Bathurst and Cornwallis Land, the whole southern shore of Cornwallis Island, Wellington Channel, Cape Spenser, and Cape Riley, Radstock Bay, Ommanney Harbour, near Cape Warrender, where the Intrepid discovered numerous well-finished graves, bearing the marks of a *comparatively* more recent date. Passing Cape Warrender, I suppose the remnant of the northern emigration from Asia to have still travelled round the coast; the more so as at Jones Sound, the only spot one of our officers happened to land upon, Esquimaux had evidently once lived (*vide* page 183). The arctic

highlander, Erasmus York, who was serving in our squadron, seemed to believe his mother to have dwelt about Smith Sound: all his ideas of things that he had heard of, but not seen, referred to places northward. He knew a musk-ox when shown a sketch of one, and said that they were spoken of by his brethren. With a pencil he could sketch the coast-line *northward* of where he embarked, Cape York, as far as Whale Sound, or even farther, by tradition; but *southward* he knew of nothing.*

Old whale-fishermen say that when, in former days, their pursuit carried them into the head of Baffin Bay, they found the natives numerous; and it is undoubted that, in spite of an apparently severe mortality amongst these arctic highlanders, or northern Esquimaux, the stock is not yet extinct. Every navigator whaler who has visited the coast northward of Cape York, reports deserted villages and dead bodies, as if some epidemic had cut down men and women suddenly, and in their prime. We found the same thing. The Intrepid's people found in the huts of the natives which were situated close to the winter quarters of the North Star, in Wolstenholme Sound, numerous corpses, unburied indeed, as if the poor creatures had been suddenly cut off, and their brethren had fled from them. Poor York, who, amongst the dead, recognised his own brother, described the malady of which they died as one of the chest or lungs: at any rate, the mortality

* The interesting account subsequently written by Dr Kane, of the condition of the Esquimaux he discovered in Smith Sound, fully confirms the correctness of these opinions.

was great. Where did the supply of human life come from? Not from the south, for then the northern and southern Esquimaux would have known of each other's existence.

Yet it is fair to say that the southern Esquimaux have faint traditions of the head of Baffin Bay and Lancaster Sound; and Egede and Crantz tell us of their belief in a northern origin, and of remote regions where beacons on hills had been erected to denote the way. All these facts point to a long and landward route pursued by the Esquimaux in their pilgrimage to Greenland from Asia; and it appears to me, that the two streams of emigration from Siberia met, as it were, in Greenland, after a long and toilsome journey eastward. Their advent is noted in Greenland by the Norse and Zealandic historians, and they appear, indeed, to have overrun and extinguished the Scandinavian colonies. Old Norse legends of 350 years ago speak of the arrival of the "Skrælings" in Greenland, and of a period of hostilities, followed by great suffering, and then we hear no more of Scandinavian colonies in Greenland, and only trace them upon ruined churches, and by time-worn Runic characters cut on tablets of stone.

Before I quit this subject it would be as well to call the attention of those interested in such questions to the extraordinary fact of the existence of Esquimaux upon the *east* side of Greenland. The remarks of Captain Graah, the Danish surveyor, lead me to the opinion that these people come from more northern parts of their own side of Greenland; and it would be a curious circumstance if future geographical discoveries should give us grounds

to believe that from the neighbourhood of Smith Sound the northern Esquimaux migration divided, and the one branch of it followed down the shores of Baffin Bay and Davis Strait, whilst the other, tracing the northern coasts of Greenland, eventually descended by the eastern seaboard to Cape Farewell. The nursery, the hotbed of this race, I believe still to exist northward of spots visited by us in Baffin Strait,—for bay it is not, even if it had no other outlets into the Polar Sea than Lancaster, Jones, and Smith Sound.

Revenons à nos moutons! The 2d, 3d, and 4th of September passed with much anxiety. Our leader threw out signals, "Where do you think the Intrepid is gone?" and on another occasion, "Do you think Intrepid is to leeward of the pack?" He was thinking much of the missing steamer. We of the sister screw had little anxiety as to her safety or capability of escaping through any pack, especially when alone and unhampered by having to keep company. A knowledge of the screw-propeller, its power and handiness in the ice, gave us a confidence in it which we had never reason to regret. At first we had been pitied, as men doomed to be cast away: we had since learned to pity others, and to be envied in our safe vessels. The "great experiment," as it was called, had succeeded, in spite of the forebodings of the ignorant, and the half-measured doubts of questionable friends; but its crowning triumph was yet to come: the *single steamer* was alone, unaided, to penetrate the pack, and seek her missing mate,*

* A single screw-steamer, the Fox, did at last solve the problem of Franklin's fate.

find her if she could, if not, winter, and seek her with foot parties both this autumn and next spring. I should be a wretch not to allow that there was a momentary pang of regret on the morning of the 5th September when I was first told that the Pioneer was to return into Wolstenholme Sound, with provisions sufficient for herself and the Intrepid to pass *two* winters more; but pride soon, both with myself and my officers and men, came to the rescue. The Intrepid might have been caught, and unable to extricate herself. Of course it was an honourable mission to go to the aid of our comrades, to give them the means of subsistence, to spend the winter with them, and, please God, escape next season, if not before, from the disagreeable position into which our summer tour in Baffin Bay had carried us: and furthermore, it was a triumph that the screws, helpless babes! were to winter alone, alone to find their way in and out of the ice, and, alone, make their way home, whilst the huge incubi that had ridden us like nightmares during the search for Franklin would be (D.V.) safely lashed in Woolwich dockyard.

The 5th was spent in sending away all our sickly or weak hands, increasing the complement of seamen by four, receiving abundance of public and private stores, bidding good-bye to our dear brother officers in the squadron, and friends, who generously pressed upon us everything they had to spare, in which they were not more generous than our leader, who put, with the utmost liberality, both his kit and storeroom at our disposal. The Pioneer, by midnight, was as deep as a sand-barge. Next morning the commodore came on

board, gave me highly flattering orders, and, having read prayers, made a speech, in which he took an affectionate farewell of the Pioneers, and struck with happy effect the two strongest chords in our hearts, thus: "You hold," said he, "Pioneers, the honour of the squadron in your hands. I thank you all for the alacrity and spirit with which you have prepared yourselves to re-enter the ice. You shall be no losers by it: and on my arrival in England I will take care to insure that you are not forgotten in rewards: indeed, I shall consider that you have the first claim, provided your commander, on his arrival in England, reports favourably on your conduct." At eight o'clock we parted company, and, under sail and steam, steered direct for Wolstenholme Island.

A little after ten o'clock we broke through a neck of ice, and had just put the helm up to run down a lead, when, happening to look over my shoulder at the Resolute, now hull down to the westward, I was astonished to see what appeared the smoke of a gun, and soon afterwards another, and another. The general recall at the mast-head was next seen, and the Assistance, under all sail, pressing to the south, showed that the Intrepid had been caught sight of. Joy was strongly marked on every countenance as we turned on our heel, and one exclamation was on every tongue—"Thank God for our escape from a second winter." It would have been indeed an unprofitable detention to have been caught in Wolstenholme Sound by the pack, as we undoubtedly should have been, whilst the vessel we went to relieve was safe without it. However, the evil was

now averted; the whole squadron was united, my provisions, men, and stores again taken out, and a memorandum issued, the purport of which was that we were to go to Woolwich. At eight o'clock the yards were squared, sails spread, and homeward we steered.

Fresh and fair gales, a sea entirely clear of all but stray icebergs, and here and there a patch of broken ice, gave us nothing to do but endeavour to reduce our speed sufficiently under canvass to insure not outrunning our consorts. In eight days we reached the latitude of Cape Farewell. Once in the Atlantic, strong gales and dark nights rendered it impossible for such ill-matched consorts to keep company, and we found ourselves sighting the Orkneys alone, fourteen days after bearing up from the latitude of Wolstenholme Island in Baffin Bay; and I anchored at Grimsby, in the river Humber, exactly three weeks from the commencement of our homeward-bound voyage. The rest of the squadron followed us to Woolwich, where all were paid off safe and sound, with the exception of one man, the only one missing out of the original one hundred and eighty officers and men who had sailed in 1850, under Captain Horatio T. Austin, C.B., to rescue or solve the fate of the Expedition commanded by Captain Sir John Franklin.

Our self-importance as arctic heroes of the first water received a sad downfall when we were first asked by a kind friend what the deuce we came home for? We had a good many *becauses* ready, but he overturned them altogether; so we had to resort to the usual resource of men in such a position: we said, "There was

a barrier of ice across Wellington Channel in 1850." Our friend said, "I deny it was a permanent one, for the Americans drifted through it!" "Indeed," we exclaimed; "at any rate there was one there in 1851." "Yes, granted; on the 12th of August; but you know there was a month of open season left: and, like an honest man, say how long it would take for that barrier, fifteen or twenty miles wide, to disperse." "As many hours!" was our reply: "and we have forsworn in future barriers of ice as well as barriers of land."

What the deuce we came home for? Those, however, who asked had cause and reasons for doing so. We were in the dark as to much that had been arrived at in England. We knew but of our own limited personal experience, and had had neither time nor opportunity to compare notes with others. The public at home sat down with the accumulated evidence of two British expeditions and an American one. They passed a verdict that Franklin had gone up Wellington Channel; and that, having gone up there, in obedience to his country's orders, it was the duty of this country to send after him, save him, or solve his fate. I for one knew I had done my duty in the sphere allotted me. But "Vox populi, vox Dei." I bowed tacitly to its decision, until attempts were made to damp the hopes of the more sanguine—in fact, to save our credit at the expense of Franklin's existence. It was time then to reconsider in all its points the subject of farther search, to compare my own recent impression of things with facts that were now before the world, and then to judge for myself whether any one had a right to declaim against farther

efforts to save Franklin's expedition. Need I say that I found no reason to stay the search?

Those who desired to stop all farther efforts had recourse to two infallible arctic solutions for the dilemma in which they were placed. There must be an impenetrable barrier of ice in Wellington Channel, or the ships must have been beset in the pack, and have perished without God's providence helping them, as it has helped all others similarly placed, without leaving a single survivor, or a vestige of any description. No such wholesale calamity, I reply, is on record.

Let us inquire into this barrier of ice in Wellington Channel. Twice had Parry seen the channel, in 1819 and 1820. He saw no barrier then. We reached it in the fall of 1850, after a very backward and severe summer, with winter fast closing in upon us. We saw long flights of birds retreating from their summer breeding-places somewhere beyond the broad fields of ice that lay athwart its channel. We wondered at the numerous shoals of white whale passing, from some unknown northern region, southward to more genial climes. We believed in fixed ice, yet in one day twelve miles of it came away, and nearly beset us amongst its fragments. We heard Captain Penny's report that there was water to be seen north of the remaining belt of about ten miles in width. We were like deaf adders. We were obstinate, and went into winter quarters under Griffith Island, believing that nothing more could be done, because a barrier of fixed ice extended across Wellington Channel! We were miserably mistaken.

The expedition under Lieutenant de Haven was then

drifting slowly over the place where we, in our ignorance, had placed fixed ice in our charts; and to them likewise the wisdom of an all-merciful Providence revealed the fact of a northern sea of open water, that they might be additional witnesses in the hour of need. We cannot do better than read the plain unvarnished tale of the gallant American—a tale of calm heroism under no ordinary trials, which stamps the document as the truthful narration of a gentleman and a sailor. He says, after describing the being beset by young ice in the mouth of Wellington Channel, and drifting northward, owing to southerly winds:—

"On the 18th September we were above Cape Bowden. . . . To account for this drift, the fixed ice of Wellington Channel, which we had observed in passing to the *westward*, must have been broken up, and driven to the southward by the heavy gale the 12th (September).

"We continued to drift slowly to the N.N.W. until the 22d, when our progress appeared to be arrested by a small low island, which was discovered about seven miles distant.

. . . . . .

"*Between Cornwallis Island and some distant high land visible in the north appeared a wide channel, leading to the westward.* A dark, misty-looking cloud which hung over it (technically termed frost-smoke) was indicative of much open water in that direction.

"Nor was the open water the only indication that presented itself in confirmation of theoretical conjecture as to a milder climate in that direction. As we entered

Wellington Channel the signs of animal life became more abundant."

So much, then, for the barrier of ice in Wellington Channel in 1850. Let us now speak of what was there in 1851. On the 11th of August about as much fixed floe was remaining in Wellington Channel as had been found by us on the previous year, *a month later in the season.* On that occasion, late as it was, we have the evidence of Lieutenant de Haven to prove the channel opened; why should we doubt its opening in 1851? An open sea existed on both sides of a belt of ice, rotten, full of holes, unfit to travel over (as Penny's officers reported it), full thirty days before the winter set in; is there an arctic navigator hardy enough to say he believes that that belt would have been found there on the next spring-tide after our squadron was liberated from Griffith Island? Then, I repeat, if it is allowed that Wellington Channel was open in 1819, 1820, 1850, and 1851, it is natural to infer that it was open when Franklin wished to pass through it in 1846, and that, under such circumstances, he would, in obedience to his orders, have gone by it to the N.W.*

The day has not long passed by when it was tried to be proved, on *undoubted testimony,* that Barrow Strait was barred with the accumulated ice of years—and this in the face of an autumnal drift of a naval squadron for 350 miles in the pack of Lancaster. What say these barrier-builders to the winter-drift of the American

* Franklin's record proves that he did, in 1846, "*ascend Wellington Channel as far as 77° N.,*" and then returned south again.

schooners under Lieutenant de Haven? Does his marvellous cruise teach us nothing? Between the 1st of November 1850 and the 6th of June 1851, his squadron was swept in one vast field of ice from the upper part of Wellington Channel to the southward of Cape Walsingham, in Davis Strait, through a tortuous route of full 1000 miles! Yes, reader, the Rescue and Advance were beset in young bay-ice in and about Wellington Channel; but during the winter, amidst the darkness, amidst fierce gales, when the God of storms alone could and did shield those brave barks, they and *the ice in which they had been beset*, moved, with few pauses, steadily and slowly to the Atlantic Ocean, and reached it by the summer of the following year.

It is true our expedition was prevented by ice from advancing to the west of Griffith Island. But let it not be supposed that we came, in that direction, upon any *fixed* bar of ice, or interminable floe-edge: far otherwise; for when, as I have elsewhere said, Lieutenant Aldrich was sent, a few days after our arrival at winter quarters, to travel on foot to Lowther Island, he found the task a hopeless one, as *water*, bay-ice, and a broken pack lay between Somerville Island and it. We likewise, in our spring journeys, found ice smooth as glass, formed evidently during the past winter, surrounding Lowther Island. It was traced by Lieutenant M'Clintock, in exactly the form of the lead of water found in 1819 and 1820 by Sir E. Parry, in his voyage to Winter Island; and there can be little doubt that, beyond the floe-pieces which choked the channel between Griffith Island and Cape Bunny, we should, in 1850, have found

water leading us to Winter Harbour, and up the noble channel north of Byam Martin Island.

Enough of icy barriers. I do not believe in nature having placed such fixtures on the "vasty deep;" but I am ready to allow that there are places in which accumulations of ice naturally exist, and where the ice moves away less rapidly than in other parts. By looking at the chart, and taking into consideration the geographical conformation of such spots, the cause will at once appear.

In a line across the head of Davis Strait the pack hangs, because it is there met, in its downward course, by the whole weight of the Atlantic Sea, and strong southerly gales blowing up that funnel-shaped strait. About Leopold Island the pack hangs, for it is acted upon by the cross tides of Wellington Channel and Regent Inlet running athwart those of Barrow Strait, and forming a sort of eddy or still water. This occurs again in the *elbow* of Wellington Channel, and between Griffith Island and Cape Bunny, where a narrowing strait, and the cross tide of the channel towards the American coast, tie up the broad floes formed in the great water-space west of that point; and, lastly, a similar choke takes place apparently off the S.W. extreme of Melville Island.

Failing in barriers, the Job's comforters dismissed the subject by swallowing up the Erebus and Terror—hull, masts, sails, and crew—in some especially infernal tempest or convulsion executed for the occasion. They—the Job's comforters—had no similar case to adduce in proof of such a catastrophe. Everybody who goes to the frozen regions tells of the hairbreadth escapes and imminent dangers

attendant on arctic navigation. I am free to acknowledge I have "piled the agony" to make my work sell. Behold the Pioneer in a nip in Melville Bay; the Resolute thumping the pack off Griffith Island; the Assistance holding on to a floe-edge with a moving one threatening to sink her; and the Intrepid on the slope of an iceberg, high and dry; yet all are safe and sound in Woolwich dockyard. The brigs Rescue and Advance, beset for 267 days, drifting during a polar winter 1150 miles, endured all possible hardship and risk, yet both vessels and men are safe and sound. Captain Penny's two vessels, the Lady Franklin and Sophia, if their figure-heads could speak, would "a tale unfold." Not the most extraordinary part of their adventures was being caught in a gale in a bay on the coast of Greenland, and being forced by a moving iceberg behind them through a field of ice fully three feet thick, the vessels rearing and plunging through it; yet they are all safe and sound. The North Star, the Enterprise, and Investigator, and farther back, the Terror—farther still, the Dorothea and Trent —have, with many more we could enumerate, seen no ordinary arctic dangers, but, thanks to a merciful Providence, unattended with loss of life. Why, therefore, in the name of charity, consign those who are dear to us, as relatives, friends, or countrymen, to sudden death in the dark waters of Lancaster Sound or Baffin Bay? No one who knew the men of that gallant squadron would so libel the leader, or his officers, as to suppose them to have turned back when at the threshold of their labours; if he does so, he does them foul injustice.

Give the lost ones the benefit of the doubt, if there is

one on your minds. Let not selfish indifference induce us to dismiss the question by adopting any of the horrible opinions to which unfeeling men have given utterance. True it is they are in sad peril—true it is they have suffered long and much—true it is that many may have fallen by the way; but the remnant, however small, of that heroic band, be assured by one who knew many of them intimately and dearly, will despair not, but, trusting in their God, their Queen, and country, will cling to hope with life's latest breath.

They have done their duty—let us not be wanting in ours. The rescue of Franklin's squadron, or the solution of their fate, entails no extraordinary risk of life upon the part of those employed in the search. Insurances to any amount for arctic service—and I speak from a knowledge of the fact—may be effected in the various insurance offices in London with a lighter premium than is demanded for the Bights of Benin or Bengal. This is a pretty good test, and a sound practical one too, of the much-talked-of dangers of polar navigation. Ships are often lost; but the very floe which by its pressure sinks the vessel saves the crew.

No loss of life (for Franklin it will be time enough to mourn when we know he is not of the living); the wonderful proofs lately acquired of a polar sea; the undoubted existence of animal life in regions which were previously supposed to be incapable of supporting animal life; and, lastly, the existence of Esquimaux in a high northern latitude in Baffin Bay, who appear to be so isolated, and so unconnected with their brethren of South Greenland, as to justify us in connecting them rather

with the numerous ruined habitations found westward as far as Melville Island, and lead the mind to speculate upon some more northern region—some *terra incognita* yet to be visited by us,—all these things encourage us—ay, urge us—not to halt in our exploration. Humanity and science are united in the cause: where one falters, let a love for the other encourage us to persevere.

Franklin and his matchless followers need no eulogy from me; the sufferings they must have undergone, the mystery that hangs over them, are on every tongue in every civilised land.

Who amongst us would not desire to emulate the fame of him who has gone where none, as yet, have followed? And who amongst us does not feel his heart throb faster, in recalling to recollection the calm heroism of the veteran leader, who, when about to enter the unknown regions of which Wellington Channel is the portal, addressed his crews in those solemn and emphatic words of Holy Writ—his motto, doubtless,—"Choose ye this day whom ye will serve;" and found in that blissful choice his strength and his endurance?

To rescue even one life were surely well worthy our best endeavours: but if it so please an all-merciful Providence that aid should reach Franklin's ships too late to save even that one, yet would we have fulfilled a high and imperative duty. Would it be no holy satisfaction to trace the last resting-place of those gallant spirits?—to recover the records there assuredly to be found, of their manly struggle, under hardships and difficulties, in achieving that North-West Passage, in the execution of which they had laid down their lives; and to bring

back to their surviving relatives and friends those last kind messages of love, evidences that sincere affection and stern sense of duty sprang from one source in their gallant and generous hearts?

Yes, of course, it would. Then, and not till then—taking this, the gloomiest view of the subject—shall we have done our duty towards the captains, officers, and crews of her Majesty's ships Erebus and Terror.

APPENDIX.

It is only justice to the munificent efforts of Mr Grinnell, as well as the generous devotion of American naval officers in the search for Franklin, to insert here the report of the gallant De Haven, and his comrades Griffin, Murdaugh, and Dr Kane. Two of those four of our gallant associates are now (1864) in their graves; but their memory will long be cherished by their English brother labourers, as well as by their own countrymen.

Report of the American Arctic Expedition, by Lieutenant de Haven, of the United States Navy, 5th February 1852.

U.S. Brig Advance,
New York, *4th October* 1851.

Sir,—I have the honour to submit the following as the proceedings of the squadron under my command subsequently to the 22d August 1850, up to which time the department is already advised of its movements.

We now stood over for the north shore, passing to the eastward of Leopold Island, threading our way through much heavy stream-ice. Barrow Strait to the westward presented one mass of heavy and closely packed ice, extending close into the coast of North Somerset. On the north shore we found open water reaching to the westward as far as Beechey Island.

At noon on the 25th we were off Cape Riley, where the vessel was hove to, and a boat sent ashore "to examine a cairn erected in a conspicuous position." It was found to contain a record of H.B.M.'s ship Assistance, deposited the day before. Another record informed us that our consort had visited the Cape at the same time with the Assistance.

Fragments of painted wood and preserved-meat tins were picked up on the low point of the cape; there were also other indications that it had been the camping-ground of some civilised travelling or hunting party. Our speculations at once connected them with the object of our search.

Whilst making our researches on shore, the vessel was set by a strong current near the point, where, becoming hampered by some masses of ice, she took the ground. Every effort was made to get her off, but the falling tide soon left her "hard and fast." We now lightened her of all weighty articles about deck, and prepared to renew our efforts when the tide should rise. This took place about midnight, when she was hauled off without apparent injury.

The Prince Albert approached us whilst aground, and Commander Forsyth tendered his assistance. It was not, however, required. Soon after the Rescue came in sight from around Beechey Island, and making us out in our awkward predicament, hove to in the offing, and sent a boat in. She had been up Wellington Channel as far as Point Innes. The condition of the ice prevented her from reaching Cape Hotham (the appointed place of rendezvous); so she had returned in search of us.

On the 26th, with a light breeze, we passed Beechey Island, and ran through a narrow lead to the north. Immediately above Point Innes the ice of Wellington Channel was fixed and unbroken from shore to shore, and had every indication of having so remained for at least three years. It was generally about eight feet thick, and the sharp angular hummocks peculiar to recently formed ice had been rounded down to

gentle hillocks by the action of the weather for several seasons. Further progress to the north was out of the question. To the west, however, along the edge of the fixed ice, a lead presented itself with a freshening wind from S.E. We ran into it, but at half-way across the channel our headway was arrested by the closing ice. A few miles beyond this two of the English vessels (one a steamer) were dangerously beset. I deemed it prudent to return to Point Innes, under the lee of which the vessels might hold on in security until a favourable change should take place.

On Point Innes distinct traces of an encampment were found, together with many relics similar to those found at Cape Riley. Captain Penny (whose squadron we met here) picked up a piece of paper containing the name of one of the officers of Franklin's expedition, written in pencil, thus proving beyond a doubt that some of his party had encamped here; but when, or under what circumstances, it was difficult to say. The preserved-meat cans, moreover, bore the name of the person who had supplied his ships with that article.

On Point Innes we also found the remains of an Esquimaux hut, but it had evidently been abandoned for many years. No recent traces of this people were found on any of the shores of Lancaster Sound that we visited.

The weather becoming more favourable, we retraced our steps as far as Beechey Island, in order to make more minute investigations in that quarter. The vessels were made fast to the land ice, on the N.W. side of the island, on the 27th August. The schooner Felix, Captain Sir John Ross, R.N., and the squadron under Captain Penny, joined us at this point. Consulting with these gentlemen, a joint search was instituted along the adjacent shores, in all directions. In a short time one of Captain Penny's men returned, and reported that he had discovered "several graves." On examination his report proved to be correct. Three well-made graves were

found, with painted head-boards of wood; the inscriptions on which were as follows:—

I.

"Sacred to the memory of W. Braine, R.M., her Majesty's ship Erebus; died April 3, 1846, aged 32 years.—'Choose ye this day whom ye will serve.'"

II.

"Sacred to the memory of Jno. Hartwell, A.B., her Majesty's ship Erebus, aged 23 years.—'Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, consider your ways.'"

III.

"Sacred to the memory of Jno. Torrington, who departed this life Jan. 1, A.D. 1846, on board her Majesty's ship Terror, aged 20."

Near the graves were also other unmistakable evidence of the missing expedition having passed its first winter here. They consisted of innumerable scraps of old rope and canvass; the blocks on which stood the *armourer's anvil*, with many pieces of coal and iron around it, the outlines of several tents or houses, supposed to have been the site of the observatory, and erections for sheltering the mechanics. The chips and shavings of the carpenter still remained. A short distance from this was found a large number of preserved-meat tins, all having the same label as those found at Point Innes.

From all these indications the inference could not fail to be arrived at that the Erebus and Terror had made this their first winter-quarters after leaving England. The spot was admirably chosen for the security of the ships, as well as for their early escape the following season. Everything, too, went to prove that up to this point the expedition was well organised, and that the vessels had not received any material injury.

Early on the morning of the 28th of August, her Britannic Majesty's ship Resolute, Captain Austin, with her steam-tender, arrived from the eastward. Renewed efforts were made by all parties to discover some written notice which Sir J. Franklin ought to have deposited at this place in some conspicuous position. A cairn of stones erected on the highest part of the island was discovered. A most thorough search with crows and picks was instituted at and about it, in the presence of all hands. This search was continued for several days, but not the slightest vestige of a record could be found. The graves were not opened or disturbed,

Captain Sir John Ross had towed out from England a small vessel of about 12 tons. He proposed leaving her at this point to fall back upon in case of disaster to any of the searching vessels. Our contribution to supply her was three barrels of provisions.

From the most elevated part of Beechey Island (about 800 feet high) an extensive view was had, both to the north and west. No open water could be seen in either direction.

On the 27th of August we cast off from Beechey Island, and joined our consort at the edge of the fixed ice, near Point Innes. Acting-master S. P. Griffin, commander of the Rescue, had just returned from a searching excursion along the shore, on which he had been despatched forty-eight hours before. Midshipman Lovell and four men composed his party. He reports that, pursuing carefully his route to the northward, he came upon a partially overturned cairn of large dimensions, on the beach, a few miles south of Cape Bowden. Upon strict examination it appeared to have been erected as a place of depot of provisions. No clue could be found within it or around as to the persons who built it, neither could its age be arrived at.

At 2 P.M. of the 28th reached Cape Bowden without further discovery. Erecting a cairn, containing the information that

would prove useful to a distressed party, he commenced his journey back.

Until the 3d day of September we were detained at this point by the closing-in of the ice from the southward, occasioned by strong N.E. winds, accompanied with thick weather and snow. On this day the packed ice moved off from the edge of the fixed ice, leaving a practicable lead to the westward, into which we at once stood. At midnight, when about two-thirds of the way across the channel, the closing ice arrested our progress. We were in some danger from heavy masses coming against us, but both vessels passed the night uninjured. In the evening of the 4th we were able to make a few more miles westing, and the following day we reached Barlow Inlet. The ice being impracticable to the southward, we secured the vessels at its entrance. The Assistance and her steam tender were seen off Cape Hotham, behind which they disappeared in the course of the day.

Barlow Inlet would afford good shelter for vessels in case of necessity, but it would require some cutting to get in or out. The ice of last winter still remained unbroken.

A fresh breeze from the north on the 8th caused the ice in the channel to set to the southward. It still remained, however, closely packed on Cape Hotham. On the 9th, in the morning, the wind shifted to the westward, an opening appeared, and we at once got under way. Passing Cape Hotham, a lead was seen along the south side of Cornwallis Island, into which, with a head wind, we worked slowly, our progress being much impeded by bay ice; indeed, it brought us to a dead stand more than once. The following day we reached Griffith Island, passing the southern point of which the English searching vessels were descried made fast to the ice a few miles distant. The western lead closing at this point, we were compelled to make fast also.

The ice here was so very unfavourable for making further progress, and the season was so far advanced, that it became

necessary to take future movements into serious consideration. A consultation was had with Mr Griffin, and after reviewing carefully all the circumstances attending our position, it was judged that we had not gained a point from which we could commence operations in the season of 1851 with decided advantages. Therefore, agreeably to my instructions, I felt it an imperative duty to extricate the vessels from the ice, and return to the United States.

The state of the weather prevented our acting immediately upon this decision.

September 11.—Wind from the eastward, with fog and snow; we were kept stationary. Much bay ice forming. Thermometer 26°. Early in the morning of the 12th the wind changed to the N.W., and increased rapidly to a heavy gale, which, coming off the ice, brought with it clouds of drift-snow.

The Rescue was blown from her ice-anchors, and went adrift so suddenly that a boat and two of her men were left behind. She got under sail, but the wind was too strong for her to regain the ice. The driving snow soon hid her from us. The Advance came near, meeting the same fate. The edge of the floe kept breaking away, and it was with much difficulty that other ice-anchors could be planted farther in to hold on by. The thermometer fell to 8°; mean for the twenty-four hours, 14°.

On the morning of the 13th, the wind having moderated sufficiently, we got under way, and, working our way through some streams of ice, arrived in a few hours at Griffith Island, under the lee of which we found our consort made fast to the shore, where she had taken shelter in the gale, her crew having suffered a good deal from the inclemency of the weather. In bringing-to under the lee of the island, she had the misfortune to spring her rudder, so that on joining us it was with much difficulty she could steer. To insure her safety and more rapid progress, she was taken in

tow by the Advance, when she bore up with a fine breeze from the westward. Off Cape Martyr we left the English squadron under Captain Austin. About ten miles farther to the east, the two vessels under Captain Penny, and that under Sir John Ross, were seen secured near the land. At 8 P.M. we had advanced as far as Cape Hotham. Thence, as far as the increasing darkness of the night enabled us to see, there was nothing to obstruct our progress except the bay ice. This, with a good breeze, would not have impeded us much; but unfortunately the wind when it was most required failed us. The snow with which the surface of the water was covered rapidly cemented, and formed a tenacious coat, through which it was impossible with all our appliances to force the vessels. At last they came to a dead stand some ten miles to the east of Barlow Inlet.

The following day the wind hauled to the southward, from which quarter it lasted till the 19th. During this period the young ice was broken, its edges squeezed up into hummocks, and one floe overrun by another until it all assumed the appearance of heavy ice.

The vessels received some heavy nips from it, but they withstood them without injury. Whenever a pool of water made its appearance, every effort was made to reach it, in hopes it would lead us to Beechey Island, or some other place where the vessel might be placed in security, for the winter set in unusually early, and the severity with which it commenced forbade all hopes of our being able to return this season. I now became anxious to attain a point in the neighbourhood from whence, by means of land-parties in the spring, a goodly extent of Wellington Channel might be examined.

In the mean time, under the influence of the south wind, we were being set up the channel. On the 18th we were above Cape Bowden, the most northern point seen on this shore by Parry.

The land on both shores was seen much farther, and trended considerably to the west of north. To account for this drift, the fixed ice of Wellington Channel, which we had observed in passing to the westward, must have been broken up, and driven to the southward by the heavy gale of the 12th.

On the 19th the wind veered to the *north*, which gave us *a southerly set*, forcing us at the same time with the western shore. This did not last long, for the next day the wind hauled again to the south, and blew fresh, bringing the ice in upon us with much pressure. At midnight it broke up all around, so that we had work to maintain the Advance in a safe position, and keep her from being separated from her consort, which was immovably fixed in the centre of a large floe.

We continued to drift slowly to *the N.N.W. until the 22d*, when our progress appeared to be arrested by a small low island which was discovered in that direction, about seven miles distant. A channel of three or four miles in width separated it from Cornwallis Island. This latter island, trending N.W. from our position, terminated abruptly in an elevated cape, to which I have given the name of Manning, after a warm personal friend and ardent supporter of the expedition. Between *Cornwallis Island* and some distant high land *visible in the north appeared a wide channel leading to the westward. A dark misty-looking cloud which hung over it (technically termed frost-smoke) was indicative of much open water in that direction.*

This was the direction to which my instructions, referring to the investigations at the National Observatory concerning the winds and currents of the ocean, directed me to look for open water.

Nor was the open water the only indication that presented itself in confirmation of this theoretical conjecture as to a milder climate in that direction. As we entered Wellington

Channel the signs of animal life became more abundant; and Captain Penny, commander of one of the English expeditions, who afterwards penetrated on sledges towards the region of the "frost-smoke," much farther than it was possible for us to do in our vessels, reported that he actually arrived on the borders of this open sea.

Thus these admirably drawn instructions, deriving arguments from the enlarged and comprehensive system of physical research, not only pointed with emphasis to an unknown open sea into which Franklin had probably found his way, but directed me to search for traces of his expedition in the very channel at the entrance of which it is now ascertained he had passed his first winter.

The direction in which search with most chances of success is now to be made for the missing expedition, or for traces of it, is no doubt in the direction which is so clearly pointed out in my instructions.

To the channel which appeared to lead into the open sea, over which the cloud of "frost-smoke" hung as a sign, I have given the name of "Maury," after the distinguished gentleman at the head of our National Observatory, whose theory with regard to an open sea to the north is likely to be realised through this channel. To the large mass of land visible between N.W. to N.N.E. I gave the name of "Grinnell," in honour of the head and heart of the man in whose philanthropic mind originated the idea of this expedition, and to whose munificence it owes its existence.

To a remarkable peak bearing N.N.E. from us, distant about forty miles, was given the name of "Mount Franklin." An inlet or harbour immediately to the north of Cape Bowden was discovered by Mr Griffin, in his land excursion from Point Innes on the 27th of August, and has received the name of "Griffin Inlet."

The small island mentioned before was called "Murdaugh" Island, after the acting-master of the Advance.

The eastern shore of Wellington Channel appeared to run parallel with the western, but it became quite low, and being covered with snow, could not be distinguished with certainty, so that its continuity with the high land to the north was not ascertained.

Some small pools of open water appearing near us, an attempt was made about fifty yards, but our combined efforts were of no avail in extricating the Rescue from her icy cradle. A change of wind not only closed the ice up again, but threatened to give us a severe nip. We unshipped her rudder, and placed it out of harm's way.

September 23d was an uncomfortable day. The wind was from N.E., with snow. From an early hour in the morning the floes began to be pressed together with so much force, that their edges were thrown up in immense ridges of rugged hummocks. The Advance was heavily nipped between two floes, and the ice was piled up so high above the rail on the starboard side as to threaten to come on board and sink us with its weight. All hands were occupied in keeping it out. The pressure and commotion did not cease till near midnight, when we were very glad to have a respite from our labours and fears. The next day we were threatened with a similar scene, but it fortunately ceased in a short time.

For the remainder of September, and until the 4th of October, the vessels drifted but little. The winds were very light, the thermometer fell to minus 12, and ice formed over the pools in sight sufficiently strong to travel upon.

We were now strongly impressed with the belief that the ice had become fixed for the winter, and that we should be able to send out travelling parties from the advanced position, for the examination of the lands to the northward. Stimulated by this fair prospect, another attempt was made to reach the shore, in order to establish a depot of provisions at or near Cape Manning, which would materially facilitate the progress of our parties in the spring; but the ice was still

found to be detached from the shore, and a narrow lane of water cut us from it.

During the interval of comparative quiet, preliminary measures were taken for heating the Advance, and increasing her quarters, so as to accommodate the officers and crews of both vessels. No stoves had as yet been used in either vessels; indeed they could not well be put up without placing a large quantity of stores and fuel upon the ice. The attempt was made to do this, but a sudden crack in the floe where it appeared strongest causing the loss of several tons of coal, convinced us that it was not yet safe to do so. It was not until the 20th of October we got fires below. Ten days later the housing cloth was put over, and the officers and crew of the Rescue ordered on board the Advance for the winter. Room was found on the deck of the Rescue for many of the provisions removed from the hold of this vessel; still a large quantity had to be placed on the ice.

The absence of fires below had caused much discomfort to all hands ever since the beginning of September, not so much from the low temperature, as from the accumulation of moisture by condensation, which congealed as the temperature decreased, and covered the wood-work of our apartments with ice. This state of things soon began to work its effect upon the health of the crews. Several cases of scurvy appeared among them; and, notwithstanding the indefatigable attention and active treatment resorted to by the medical officers, it could not be eradicated; its progress, however, was checked.

All through October and November we were drifted to and fro by the changing wind, but never passing out of Wellington Channel. On the 1st of November the new ice had attained the thickness of 37 inches; still frequent breaks would occur in it, often in fearful proximity to the vessels. Hummocks, consisting of massive granite-like blocks, would be thrown up to the height of twenty and even thirty feet. This action in the ice was accompanied with a variety of

sounds impossible to be described, but which when heard never failed to carry a feeling of awe into the stoutest hearts. In the stillness of an arctic night they could be heard several miles, and often was the rest of all hands disturbed by them.

To guard against the worst that could happen to us—the destruction of the vessels—the boats were prepared and sledges built. Thirty days' provisions were placed in for all hands, together with tents and blanket-bags for sleeping in. Besides this, each man and officer had his knapsack, containing an extra suit of clothes. These were all kept in readiness for use at a moment's notice.

For the sake of wholesome exercise, as well as to inure the people to ice-travelling, frequent excursions were made with our laden sledges. The officers usually took the lead at the drag-ropes, and they, as well as the men, underwent the labour of surmounting the rugged hummocks with great cheerfulness and zeal. Notwithstanding the low temperature, all hands usually returned in a profuse perspiration. We had also other sources of exercise and amusement, such as foot-ball, skating, sliding, racing, with theatrical representations on holidays and national anniversaries. These amusements were continued throughout the winter, and contributed very materially to the cheerfulness and general good health of all hands.

The drift had set us gradually to the S.E., until we were about *five miles to the S.W. of Beechey Island.* In this position we remained comparatively *stationary about a week.* We once more began to entertain a hope that we had become fixed for the winter; but it proved a vain one, for on the *last day of November a strong wind from the westward set in with thick snowy weather.* This wind created an immediate movement in the ice. Several fractures took place near us, and many heavy hummocks were thrown up. The floe in which our vessels were imbedded was being rapidly encroached upon, so that we were in momentary fear of the ice breaking

from around them, and that they would be once more broken out, and left to the tender mercies of the crushing floes.

On the following day (the 1st of December) the weather cleared off, and the few hours of twilight which we had about noon enabled us to get a glimpse of the land. *As well as we could make it out, we appeared to be off Gascoigne Inlet.*

We were now clear of Wellington Channel, and in the fair way of Lancaster Sound, to be set either up or down, at the mercy of the prevailing winds and currents. We were not long left in doubt as to the direction we had to pursue. The winds prevailed from the westward, and our drift was steady and rapid towards the mouth of the sound.

The prospect before us was now anything but cheering. We were deprived of our last fond hope, that of becoming fixed in some position whence operations could be carried on by means of travelling parties in the spring. The vessels were fast being set out of the region of search.

Nor was this our only source of uneasiness. The line of our drift was from two to five miles from the north shore, and whenever the moving ice met with any of the capes or projecting points of the land the obstruction would cause fractures in it, extending off to and far beyond us.

Cape Hurd was the first and most prominent point. We were but two miles from it on the 3d of December. Nearly all day the ice was both seen and heard to be in constant motion at no great distance from us. In the evening a crack in our floe took place not more than twenty-five yards ahead of the Advance. It opened in the course of the evening to the width of a hundred yards.

No further disturbance took place until noon of the 5th, when we were somewhat startled by the familiar and unmistakable sound of the ice grinding against the side of the ship. Going on deck, I perceived that another crack had taken place, passing along the length of the vessel.

It did not open more than a foot. This, however, was

sufficient to liberate the vessel, and she rose several inches boldly, having become more buoyant since she froze in. The following day, in the evening, the crack opened several yards, leaving the sides of the Advance entirely free, and she was once more supported by and rode in her own element. We were not, though, by any means in a pleasant situation. The floes were considerably broken in all directions around us, and one crack had taken place between the two vessels. The Rescue was not disturbed in her bed of ice.

December 7.—At 8 A.M. the crack in which we were had opened and formed a lane of water fifty-six feet wide, communicating ahead at the distance of sixty feet with ice of about one foot in thickness, which had formed since the 3d. The vessel was secured to the largest floe near us (that on which our spare stores were deposited). At noon the ice was again in motion, and began to close, affording us the pleasant prospect of an inevitable "nip" between two floes of the heaviest kind. In a short time the prominent points took our side on the starboard, just about the main-rigging, and on the port under the counter, and at the fore-rigging; thus bringing three points of pressure in such a position that it must have proved fatal to a larger or less strengthened vessel.

The Advance, however, stood it bravely. After trembling and groaning in every joint, the ice passed under and raised her about two feet and a half. She was let down again for a moment, and then her stern was raised about five feet. Her bows being unsupported, were depressed almost as much. In this uncomfortable position we remained. The wind blew a gale from the eastward, and the ice all around was in a dreadful commotion, excepting, fortunately, that in immediate contact with us. The commotion in the ice continued all through the night, and we were in momentary expectation of witnessing the destruction of both vessels. The easterly gale had set us some two or three miles to the west.

As soon as it was light enough to see on the 9th, it was discovered that the heavy ice in which the Rescue had been imbedded for so long a time was entirely broken up, and piled up around her in massive hummocks. On her pumps being sounded I was gratified to learn that she remained tight, notwithstanding the immense straining and pressure she must have endured.

During this period of trial, as well as in all former and subsequent ones, I could not avoid being struck with the calmness and decision of the officers, as well as the subordination and good conduct of the men, without an exception. Each one knew the imminence of the peril that surrounded us, and was prepared to abide it with a stout heart. There was no noise, no confusion. I did not detect, even in the moment when the destruction of the vessels seemed inevitable, a single desponding look among the whole crew; on the contrary, each one seemed resolved to do his whole duty, and everything went on cheerily and bravely.

For my own part, I had become quite an invalid, so much so as to prevent my taking an active part in the duties of the vessel, as I always had done, or even from incurring the exposure necessary to proper exercise. However, I felt no apprehension that the vessel would not be properly taken care of, for I had perfect confidence in one and all by whom I was surrounded. I knew them to be equal to any emergency; but I felt under special obligations to the gallant commander of the Rescue for the efficient aid he rendered me. With the kindest consideration and most cheerful alacrity, he volunteered to perform the executive duties during the winter, and relieve me from everything that might tend in the least to retard my recovery.

During the remainder of December the ice remained quiet immediately around us, and breaks were all strongly cemented by new ice. In our neighbourhood, however, cracks were daily visible. Our drift to the eastward averaged nearly six miles

per day, so that on the last of the month we were at the entrance of the sound, *Cape Osborn bearing north from us.*

January 1851.—*On passing out of the sound, and opening Baffin Bay, to the north was seen a dark horizon, indicating much open water in that direction.*

On the 11th a crack took place between us and the Rescue, passing close under our stern. It opened, and formed *a lane of water eighty feet wide.* In the afternoon the floes began to move, the lane was closed up, and the edges of the ice coming in contact with so much pressure, threatened the demolition of the narrow space which separated us from the line of fracture. Fortunately the floes again separated, and assumed a motion by which the Rescue passed from our stern to the port bow, and increased her distance from us 700 yards, where she came to a stand. Our stores that were on the ice were on the same side of the cracks as the Rescue, and, of course, were carried with her.

The following day the ice remained quiet; but soon after midnight, on the 13th, a gale having sprung up from the westward, it once more got into violent motion. The young ice in the crack, near our stern, was soon broken up, the edges of the thick ice came in contact, and fearful pressure took place, forcing up a line of hummocks which approached within ten feet of our stern. The vessel trembled and complained a great deal.

At last the floe broke up around us into many pieces, and became detached from the sides of the vessel. The scene of frightful commotion lasted until 4 A.M. Every moment I expected the vessel would be crushed or overwhelmed by the massive ice forced up far above our bulwarks. The Rescue being further removed on the other side of the crack from the line of crushing, and being firmly imbedded in heavy ice, I was in hopes would remain undisturbed. This was not the case; for, on sending to her as soon as it was light enough to see, the floe was found to be broken away entirely up to

her bows, and there formed into such high hummocks that her bowsprit was broken off, together with her head, and all the light wood-work about it. Had the action of the ice continued much longer, she must have been destroyed.

We had the misfortune to find sad havoc had been made among the stores and provisions left on the ice; a few barrels were recovered, but a large portion were crushed, and had disappeared.

On the morning of the 14th, there was again some motion in the floes. That on the port side moved off from the vessel two or three feet, and there became stationary. This left the vessel entirely detached from the ice round the water-line, and it was expected she would once more resume an upright position. In this, however, we were disappointed, for she remained with her stern elevated, and a considerable list to starboard, being held in this uncomfortable position by the heavy masses which had been forced under her bottom. She retained this position until she finally broke out in the spring.

We were now fully launched into Baffin Bay, and our line of drift began to be more southerly, assuming a direction nearly parallel with the western shore of the bay, at a distance of from 40 *to* 70 *miles from it.*

After an absence of eighty-seven days, the sun, on the 29th of January, rose his whole diameter above the southern horizon, and remained visible more than an hour. All hands gave vent to delight on seeing an old friend again, in three hearty cheers.

The length of the days now went on increasing rapidly, but no warmth was yet experienced from the sun's rays; on the contrary, the cold became more intense. Mercury became congealed in February, also in March, which did not occur at any other period during the winter.

A very low temperature was invariably accompanied with clear and calm weather, so that our coldest days were, per-

haps, the most pleasant. In the absence of wind we could take exercise in the open air without feeling any inconvenience from the cold; but with a strong wind blowing, it was dangerous to be exposed to its chilling blasts for any length of time, even when the thermometer indicated a comparatively moderate degree of temperature.

The ice around the vessel soon became again cemented and fixed, and no other rupture was experienced until it finally broke up in the spring, and allowed us to escape. Still we kept driving to the southward along with the whole mass. Open lanes of water were visible at all times from aloft; sometimes they would be formed within a mile or two of us. Narwhales, seals, and dovekeys were seen in them. Our sportsmen were not expert enough to procure any, except a few of the latter, although they were indefatigable in their exertions to do so. Bears would frequently be seen prowling about; only two were killed during the winter; others were wounded, but made their escape. A few of us thought their flesh very palatable and wholesome, but the majority utterly rejected it. The flesh of the seal, when it could be obtained, was received with more favour.

As the season advanced, the cases of scurvy became more numerous, yet they were all kept under control by the unwearied attention and skilful treatment of the medical officers. My thanks are due to them, especially to passed assistant-surgeon Kane, the senior medical officer of the expedition. I often had occasion to consult him concerning the health of the crew, and it is in a great measure owing to the advice which he gave, and the expedients which he recommended, that the expedition was enabled to return without the loss of one man. By the latter end of February the ice had become sufficiently thick to enable us to build a trench round the stern of the Rescue, sufficiently deep to ascertain the extent of the injury she had received in the gale at Griffith Island.

It was not found to be material; the upper gudgeon

alone had been wrenched from the sternpost. It was adjusted, and the rudder repaired in readiness for shipping when it should be required. A new bowsprit was also made for her out of the few spars we had left, and everything made seaworthy, in both vessels, before the breaking up of the ice.

On the 1st of April a hole was cut in some ice that had been forming since our first besetment in September. It was found to have attained the thickness of 7 feet 2 inches.

In this month (April) the amelioration of the temperature became quite sensible. All hands were kept at work, cutting and sawing the ice around the vessels, in order to allow them to float once more. With the Rescue they succeeded, after much labour, in attaining this object; but around the stern of the Advance the ice was so thick, that our 13-feet saw was too short to pass through it. Her bows and sides, as far aft as the gangway, were liberated.

After making some alteration in the Rescue, for the better accommodation of her crew, and fires being lighted on board of her several days previous, to remove the ice and dampness which had accumulated during the winter, both officers and crew were transferred to her on the 24th of April. The stores of this vessel which had been taken out were restored, the housing cloth taken off, and the vessel made in every respect ready for sea. There was little prospect, however, of our being able to reach the desired element very soon. The nearest water was a narrow lane more than two miles distant. To cut through the ice which intervened would have been next to impossible. Beyond this lane, from the mast-head, nothing but interminable floes could be seen. It was thought best to wait in patience, and allow nature to work for us.

In May, the noonday sun began to take effect upon the snow which covered the ice; the surface of the floes became watery, and difficult to walk over. Still the dissolution was so slow, in comparison with the mass to be dissolved, that it must have taken us a long period to become liberated from

this cause alone. More was expected from our southerly drift, which still continued, and must soon carry us into a milder climate and open sea.

On the 19th of May the land about Cape Searle was made out, the first that we had seen since passing Cape Walter Bathurst, about the 20th of January. A few days later we were off Cape Walsingham, and on the 27th passed out of the arctic zone.

June 6, a moderate breeze from the S.E., with pleasant weather, thermometer up to 40° at noon, and altogether quite a warm and melting day. During the morning a peculiar crackling sound was heard on the floe. I was inclined to impute it to the settling of the snow-drifts as they were acted upon by the sun; but in the afternoon, about five o'clock, the puzzle was solved very lucidly, and to the exceeding satisfaction of all hands. A crack in the floe took place between us and the Rescue, and in a few minutes thereafter the whole immense field in which we had been imbedded so many months was rent in all directions, leaving not a piece exceeding 100 yards in diameter. This rupture was not accompanied with any noise. The Rescue was entirely liberated, the Advance only partially. The ice in which her after part was imbedded, still adhered to her from the main chains aft, keeping her stern elevated in an unsightly position. The "pack" (as it may now be called) became quite loose, and but for our pertinacious friend acting as an immense drag upon us, we might have made some headway in any desired direction. All our efforts were now turned to getting rid of it. With saws, axes, and crowbars, the people went to work with a right good will, and, after hard labour for forty-eight hours, succeeded. The vessel was again afloat, and she righted. The joy of all hands vented itself spontaneously in three hearty cheers. The after part of the false keel was gone, being carried away by the ice. The loss of it, however, I was glad to perceive, did not materially affect the

sailing or working qualities of the vessel. The rudders were shipped, and were once more ready to move, as efficient as on the day we left New York.

Steering to the S.E., and working slowly through the loose but heavy pack, on the 9th we parted from the Rescue in a dense fog, she taking a different lead from the one the Advance was pursuing.

On the morning of the 10th, with a fresh breeze from north, under a press of sail, we forced a way into an open and clear sea, in latitude 65° 30′, about thirty-five miles from the spot in which we were liberated.

The wind, which in the ice was merely fresh, proved to be in clear water a gale, with a heavy sea running. Through this we laboured till the next morning. When it moderated, the coast of Greenland was in sight.

Our course was now directed for the Whale Fish Islands (the place of rendezvous appointed for our consort), which we reached on the 16th, not, however, without having some difficulty in getting through the unusual number of bergs which lined the coast. In an encounter with one we lost a studding-sail boom.

I had two objects in visiting these islands, that of verifying our chronometers, and to recruit our somewhat debilitated crews. The latter object I learned, on arriving, could be much better obtained, and the former quite as well, at Lievely, on Disco Island, for which place I bore up, leaving orders for the Rescue to follow us. We arrived on the 17th, and the Rescue joined us the day after.

The crews were indulged with a run on shore every day that we remained, which they enjoyed exceedingly, after their tedious winter confinement. This recreation, together with a few vegetables of an antiscorbutic character which were obtained, was of much benefit to them. There were no fresh provisions to be had here at this season of the year. Fortunately, one of the Danish company's vessels arrived

from Copenhagen whilst we remained, and from her we obtained a few articles that we stood much in need of. The company's store was nearly exhausted, but what remained was kindly placed at our disposal.

On the 22d, our crews being much invigorated by their exercise on *terra firma*, and the few still affected with the scurvy being in a state of convalescence, *we got under way with the intention of prosecuting the object of the expedition for one season more, at least.*

From the statement made to us at Lievely, the last winter had been an extraordinary one. The winds had prevailed to an unusual degree from the N.W., and the ice was not at any time fixed. The whaling fleet had passed to the northward previous to our arrival.

On the 24th we met with some obstruction from the ice off Hare Island, and on the following day our progress was completely arrested by it at Stovoe Island. In seeking for a passage we got beset in a pack near the lee shore, near to which we were carried by the drifting ice, and narrowly escaped being driven on the rocks. After getting out of this difficulty, we availed ourselves of every opening in the ice, and worked slowly to the northward, near the shore.

On the 1st of July we were off the Danish port and settlement of Proven, and as the condition of the ice rendered further progress at present impossible, we went in and anchored to wait for a change.

Here again some scurvy-grass was collected, and the men allowed to run on shore.

On the 3d we got under way, and ran out to look at the ice; but finding it still closely packed, returned to our anchorage.

On the 6th the accounts from our look-out on the hill near us were more favourable. Again we got under way, and finding the pack somewhat loose, succeeded in making some headway through it. The following day we got into clear water, and fell in with two English whaling-vessels, the Pacific and

Jane. To their gentlemanly and considerate commanders we are much indebted for the supplies furnished us, consisting of potatoes, turnips, and other articles, most acceptable to people in our condition. Much interesting news was also gained from them respecting important events which had occurred since we left home.

Their statements as to the condition of the ice to the northward were anything but flattering to our prospects. They had considered it so very unfavourable as to abandon the attempt to push through Melville Bay, and were now on their way to the southward.

On the 8th we communicated with the settlement of Uppernavik. The next day two more English whaling-vessels passed, on their way to the southward. At the same time the M'Lellan, of New London, the only American whaler in Baffin Bay, was descried, also standing south. On communicating with her, we were rejoiced to find letters and papers from home, transmitted by the kindness of Mr Grinnell.

We remained by the M'Lellan several hours, in order to close our letters, and despatch them by her. Several articles that we stood much in need of were purchased from her.

On the 10th, the Baffin Islands being in sight to the north, we met the remainder of the whaling fleet returning. They confirmed the accounts given us by the Pacific and Jane in regard to the unfavourable condition of the ice for an early passage through Melville Bay.

The following are the names of vessels communicated with—viz., Joseph Green of Peterhead, Alexander of Dundee, Advice of Dundee, Princess Charlotte of Dundee, Horn of Dundee, Ann of Hull, Regalia of Kirkcaldy, Chieftain of Kirkcaldy, and Lord Gambier of Hull. My notes are unfortunately at fault as to the names of their enterprising and warm-hearted commanders, each of whom vied with the other in showering upon us such articles as they knew we must be in want of, consisting of potatoes, turnips, fresh beef, &c. My proposi-

tion to compensate them they would not entertain for a moment; and I take this occasion of making public acknowledgment of the valuable aid rendered us, to which, no doubt, much of our subsequent good health is owing.

On the 11th, in attempting to run between the Baffin Islands, the Advance grounded on a rocky shoal. The Rescue barely escaped the same fate by hauling by the wind on discovering our mishap. Fortunately there was a large grounded berg near, to which our hawsers could be taken for hauling off, which we succeeded in doing after twenty-four hours' hard work. The vessel had not apparently received any injury; but a few days later another piece of her false keel came off, supposed to have been loosened on this occasion.

The ice to the north of the islands was too closely packed to be penetrated, and the prevalence of southerly winds afforded but little prospect of a speedy opening.

On the 16th the searching yacht Prince Albert succeeded in reaching near to our position, after having been in sight for several days. Mr Kennedy, her commander, came on board, and brought us letters.

The berth in which our vessels were made fast in this place was alongside of a low tongue of an immense berg, which, by accurate measurement, towered up to the height of 245 feet above the water-level. It was aground in ninety-six fathoms water, thus making the whole distance, from top to bottom, 821 feet. We saw many bergs equally as large as this, and some much larger, but this was the only one we had so good an opportunity of measuring with accuracy.

On the 17th the ice opened a little and we got under way. Hence till the 27th, with almost incessant work, by watching every opening, we continued to make a few miles each day, the Prince Albert keeping company with us. On this day, while running through a narrow lead, the ice closed suddenly. The Advance was caught in a tight place, and pretty severely nipped. We managed to unship the rudder, but before it

could be secured the crashing ice carried it under. We had lines fast to it, however, and after the action of the ice ceased it was extricated without injury. The Rescue and Prince Albert, although near us, were in better berths, and escaped the severe nip the Advance received.

We were closely beset in this position, and utterly unable to move, until the 4th of August, when, the ice slacking a little, we succeeded in getting hold of the land ice one mile further to the north. The Prince Albert was still in the pack, a mile or two to the southward of us. *Mr Kennedy informed me that it was his intention to abandon this route and return to the southward, as soon as his vessel could be extricated from her present position, in hopes of finding the ice more practicable in that direction.* Some letters and papers that he had brought out for the other English searching-vessels he placed on board of us. Unfortunately, we were unable to deliver them.

We lost sight of the Prince Albert on the 13th. For our own part, there was no possibility of moving in any direction. The berth we had taken up, under the impression that it was a good and safe one, proved a regular trap, for the drift pack not only set in upon us, but innumerable bergs came drifting along from the southward, and stopped near our position, forming a perfect wall around us, at not more than from 200 to 400 yards' distance. Many unsuccessful attempts were made to get out. The winds were light, and all motion in the ice had apparently ceased. The young ice, too, began to form rapidly, and was only prevented from cementing permanently together the broken masses around us by the frequent undulations occasioned by the overturning or falling to pieces of the neighbouring bergs.

My anxiety daily increased at the prospect of being obliged to spend another winter in a similar, if not worse situation, than was that of the last.

On the 18th the ice was somewhat looser. We immediately

took advantage of it, and managed to find an opening between the large bergs sufficiently wide to admit the passage of the vessels. Outside the bergs we had open water enough to work in.

We stood to the N.W., but the lead closing at the distance of a few miles, and the ice appearing as unfavourable as ever, I did not deem it prudent to run the risk of their besetment again at this late period of the season; and considering that, even if successful in crossing the pack, it would be too late to hope to attain a point on the route of search as far as we had been last year, therefore, in obedience to that clause in my instructions which says, "You are especially enjoined not to spend, if it can be avoided, more than one winter in the arctic regions;" accordingly, with sad hearts that our labours had served to throw so little light upon the object of our search, it was resolved to give it up, and return to the United States.

We therefore retraced our steps to the southward. The ice that had so much impeded our progress had entirely disappeared. We touched for refreshment by the way at some of the settlements on the coast of Greenland, where we were most kindly and hospitably received by the Danish authorities.

Leaving Holsteinberg on the 6th September for New York, the two vessels were separated in a gale to the southward of Cape Farewell. The Advance arrived on the 30th ultimo, and the Rescue on the 7th instant, with grateful hearts from all on board to a kind superintending Providence for our safe deliverance from danger, shipwreck, and disaster, during so perilous a voyage.—I have, &c.,

(Signed) EDWIN J. DE HAVEN,
Lieutenant
commanding Arctic Expedition.

To the Hon. WM. A. GRAHAM,
Secretary of the Navy, Washington.

THE

CAREER, LAST VOYAGE, AND FATE

OF

CAPTAIN SIR JOHN FRANKLIN

THERE cannot be a better or a more noble career placed before the youth of England, and especially her sailors, as an ensample and encouragement, than that of the gallant, devoted officer whose services I have attempted to sketch in the following pages, and whose last voyage I have pictured from the traces and records discovered at Beechey Island and King William Land, aided by an intimate personal acquaintance with the regions through which he and his followers passed to a glorious grave.

In all things, and under all circumstances, Franklin stands "sans peur et sans reproche:" he carved out his own high reputation by hard labour, zeal, and self-sacrifice, and was indebted neither to the interest of friends nor to social position for attaining the summit of naval fame. Combining the highest qualities of hand and head, we find that Franklin shone equally well on the field of battle and in the field of maritime discovery; and it is in the double character of naval hero and distinguished navigator that he may be almost said to stand alone in our naval history.

LONDON, *December* 1859.

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THE

CAREER, LAST VOYAGE, AND FATE OF FRANKLIN.

CHAPTER I.

THE CAREER OF FRANKLIN.

"Themselves will fade, but not their memory,
And memory has the power to re-create them from the dust."
—*Golden Legend.*

A DAY of sunshine, and breeze waving the broad fields of golden wheat, and showing the bright blue of the corn-flower and brilliant scarlet of the poppy, spreading for many an acre over the rich fat lands of Lincolnshire. Deep dykes, well marked by pollard and willow tree, wind far away in the distance, and tell how man had won these fens from the sea. A boy of well-knit, energetic frame, with black laughing eye and dark chestnut curls, whose frank and broad English countenance, lofty forehead, and well-formed chin are indicative of future strength of character, may be seen springing through

those pleasant fields and leaping the broad ditches, towards a wide and sandy sea-shore, lashed by the foaming rollers of the North Sea. Flushed with exertion, the perspiration standing in big drops upon his white brow, and his eye lit up with boyish enthusiasm, he springs from the green turf to the sands, and hails the big ocean with a shout of joy.

He had heard of it in his father's home at Spilsby; he had read of it in the old grammar-school of Louth; he had been told how, upon that ocean, the son of a country parson in an adjoining county was humbling the pride of England's enemy; and he now saw that great sea which was to be his path to all the bright future of an earnest imagination. It was all and more than his most fervid hopes had pictured it. John Franklin from that hour was a sailor.

Like Cook, Dampier, and Nelson, his first essay was on board a merchant-ship (into which he had been sent to disgust him of the sea), and like them the hardships of a sailor's life were more than counterbalanced in his opinion by the charms of its unceasing change, novelty, and excitement. All England was now in a fever of nautical enthusiasm, arising from the war with France. Nelson and the Nile! were the watchwords to stimulate British seamen to fresh naval triumphs, and young Franklin was just the lad to seek honour at the cannon's mouth.

In those good old times, his Majesty George III., of glorious memory, rejoiced in ships named after personages tabooed in these more modern days, and on board of one entitled the Polyphemus, a stout sixty-four, commanded by, no doubt, an equally stout Captain Lawford,

our young sailor (now fourteen years old) entered in 1800 as a quarterdeck petty officer, to make his first experiences of the Royal Navy.

Within a year, the Lincolnshire boy shared in the terrible sea-fight of Copenhagen, at the time when Nelson crushed the great Northern Confederacy formed for the humiliation of England; and, as leading ship in the attack, the Polyphemus covered herself with laurels, and young Franklin soon after returned home, to tell the old and young folks, in and around his home, how the modern Dane had submitted to the sword of the descendant of their Viking forefathers. But John Franklin had intuitively learnt that for

> "Sluggard's brow the laurel never grows—
> Renown is not the child of indolent repose;"

and within two months he had succeeded in entering on board of the discovery-ship Investigator, commanded by his relative, the distinguished navigator, Captain Flinders. This step naturally led his mind into those scientific pursuits which eventually rendered Franklin one of the most ardent and trustworthy of our geographical explorers.

For more than two years we see the Investigator—old, leaky, and crazy—such a vessel as, in our day, would not be deemed fit even for the work of a collier—struggling along the then unknown shores of that great southern continent to which Flinders first gave the appropriate name of Australia. It was a school of hardship and painful labour, yet not devoid of interest to the ardent young sailor, and in all probability it was in making there the first discoveries of many a mile of coast, many a reef, many a haven, that Franklin's mind became first

imbued with that sincere love of geographical exploration and maritime discovery which subsequently formed so prominent a feature in his professional career.

Flinders was exactly the man to awaken such feelings in one so intelligent as John Franklin. He had been one of that goodly company of circumnavigators who won for England the honour of having really explored the great South Sea. He could tell of Otaheite, and explain how our rough uncared-for seamen of that day forsook their country and king for the love of its warm-hearted people. He had witnessed the ferocity of the Sandwich Islanders, and could thrill his listeners with that awful hour of murder and cannibalism in which the greatest of England's navigators fell. He had weathered many a danger upon the inhospitable shores of the then unknown Australia, and often navigated in high southern latitudes. He had in a little boat in bygone days circumnavigated the tempestuous coasts of Van Diemen's Land, and shared with Bass the honour of discovering the strait which bears the name of the latter. The clever, modest, and unassuming Flinders formed the character, and imparted much of his knowledge and information to the youth, whose destiny it was, in after years, to fall as the discoverer of the North-West Passage.

Napoleon I. was then, with characteristic ambition and far-sightedness, striving to establish a lien by priority of discovery upon the coast of the great continent with which Cook's voyages had only made Europe partially acquainted. Flinders and his gallant little band of associates succeeded, however, in forestalling the French navigators in every quarter, exhibiting a rare degree of perseverance,

zeal, and ability, for which he has not in Great Britain ever received due credit. At last the glorious old Investigator showed unmistakable signs of being no longer seaworthy, and her crew were likewise nigh worn out with scurvy and dysentery. She was condemned at Port Jackson, and Franklin embarked in 1803, with his captain and shipmates, on board H.M.S. Porpoise, for a passage to England.

Passing north-about round Australia, the Porpoise, with two consorts, found themselves entangled amongst the reefs, then but little known, of Torres Strait. Under treble-reefed topsails they sought their way. In the darkness of the night of August 18, the leading ship descried breakers close ahead, and as she fell upon the reef, fired a gun to warn the vessels in her wake. The Porpoise in a few minutes was staved and dismasted, but happily she tumbled over with her deck towards the reef, and her bottom thus saved her from immediate destruction amongst the charging rollers of the South Sea. One of her consorts struck, and, less fortunate than the Porpoise, fell towards the sea, and broke up instantly, with considerable loss of life. The other vessel fled in a dastardly manner, and her commander only escaped the punishment due to such an offence by the vessel and crew foundering in the Indian Ocean. Our young sailor now found himself one of ninety-four souls on a sand-bank—very little more than a wash, and 400 feet long, with the then inhospitable coast of Australia 180 miles distant. The nearest point at which succour was to be found was Port Jackson, 750 miles off. Thither Flinders proceeded in an open boat, and by God's mercy reached

it in time to return with the means of rescuing all his officers and crew.

An opportunity offering for China, Franklin and some of his companions proceeded thither, under command of Lieutenant Fowler, with the object of returning home in one of the Honourable Company's ships from Canton.

. . . . . .

On the last day of January 1804, a magnificent fleet of fifteen East Indiamen are putting to sea from the Canton River. Franklin has obtained a passage in the Earl Camden, commanded by stout-hearted Nathaniel Dance, the commodore of this fleet, which is laden with millions' worth of Chinese products. Most of the ships are painted as if they were line-of-battle ships; and though not fitted as men-of-war, the worthy traders of Leadenhall had provided guns and men sufficient to prevent their argosies falling without resistance into the hands of privateering Frenchmen. The 14th February finds them nearing Pulo Auor, one of the last islands seen before shaping a course for the Strait of Malacca. The China fleet are well in hand. Strange sails are seen, and soon ascertained to be the then notorious Marengo, 74, Admiral Linois, and his three satellite frigates. The Gallic chief knows it is the long-sought prize, the China fleet, with wealth enough on board to make the fortunes of all his followers. He hastens towards it, but is surprised to find fifteen ships in order of battle, some of them more warlike-looking than others, but all ready to fight. He heaves-to, in the hope that during the night the merchantmen of England will flee; but daylight of the 15th finds them all as they had passed the night, at

their quarters, guns shotted, and more prepared to do battle for the red flag which waved defiantly from their mizzen peaks than on the previous day. Linois, more than ever puzzled, does not attack, until the English bear away under easy sail; he then essays to cut off the rear-most ships. He counts without his host; the gallant Dance throws out the signal, "Tack! bear down, and engage the enemy!" A shout of joy went through that noble fleet of merchant sailors, and to the astonishment of the Frenchman he had the whole swarm about his ears. He made all sail away. Dance, in the Earl Camden, directed a general chase, and then was seen a sight of which every Englishman should cherish the recollection—a French squadron of men-of-war, perfectly equipped, led by one of their most distinguished officers, retreating before a fleet of armed merchant-ships; and well might Franklin be proud in after years of having thus shared, as a middy, in the honours of Dance's victory. Before another year had passed over his head, he was signal midshipman on board the Bellerophon, 74, and on the memorable 21st October 1805 he fought again with Nelson at Trafalgar. We see the Lincolnshire boy pass through all the phases from childhood to manhood, from the skylarking middy to the steady trustworthy lieutenant—tempered in a school of patient perseverance, and not spoilt by constant success. He saw the failure at Flushing; he marked how the underestimating of a foe brought down upon his profession the mischances of the American War; and in the disastrous attempt to capture New Orleans he was for the first time wounded.

At last, in 1814, came peace—a long peace—after a long war—a stark calm after a terrible tempest which left all Europe desolate. The passions, feelings, and energies which so long a period of excitement and danger had called into action, especially in such a service as the triumphant navy of England, had now to find vent in other channels. Thousands were thrown out of employment; sailors died of starvation; hundreds of officers laboured, on a wretched pittance, to show they deserved a better fate than to starve as half-pay lieutenants. Some went to our colonies, others sought service under foreign states. Australia, Canada, Africa, and even the present independent states of South America, owe much to these restless enterprising spirits. Franklin turned again to his early love, maritime discovery, for which the training he had undergone under the distinguished Flinders now stood him in good stead.

The young, enthusiastic, intelligent lieutenant, then thirty-one years of age, was just the man to win the kind offices of keen observers of merit like Sir Joseph Banks and Sir John Barrow. The long-vexed question of a passage to the Pacific through the arctic zone was just revived. The writings of Scoresby, an observant and skilful fisher of whales, attracted public attention to arctic discovery. Scientific men adopted and enlarged upon his views; and at last, after long years of trial and disappointment, England achieved, as we will hereafter relate, the problem she undertook to solve—the discovery of the North-West Passage to the Indies—by that same Franklin who may be said to represent the Alpha and Omega of modern arctic exploration.

CHAPTER II.

"Rise up, and look from where thou art,
And scatter with unselfish hands
Thy freshness on the barren sands
And solitudes of death."—LONGFELLOW.

ON the 25th of April 1818, the first arctic expedition of this century was sailing down the Thames. The discovery-brigs were his Majesty's ships Dorothea and Trent: Captain Buchan commanded the former, Lieutenant John Franklin the latter. They were bound to the Pacific Ocean by way of the north pole! The Admiralty had especially enjoined the gallant leader to pass between Spitzbergen and Greenland, and before "leaving England to fix with Captain John Ross (who was going by way of Baffin Bay) a rendezvous in the Pacific Ocean"!

We must not smile at what has been subsequently proved to be unfounded confidence arising from utter ignorance of the task to be accomplished; but try to picture to ourselves how difficult it then was for a nation, an Admiralty, and a navy that had conquered all else upon the high seas, to believe that mere ice was going to stay their march of triumph through the frigid zone.

Assuredly none on board the stout but ugly little brigs had any doubts. There was a supreme ignorance

of arctic navigation in those days, beyond the belief that some hard knocks might be expected. To guard against this hazard, as much wood and iron as could be well added to the original hulls of the Trent and Dorothea were bolted on to them in a certain dock in Shadwell. To be sure, some had pointed to the Hon. Captain Phipps's voyage in 1793, and shook their heads at an attempt to cross the pole; but the sanguine smiled at their fears, and spoke of those old days as only a better reason for a fresh attempt. "Oh! those were days when British fleets could not relieve Gibraltar from blockade; when sailors worked for the weather-gage; fought by Shrewsbury clock, and hauled off to repair damages; when Rodney had to hang captains, and Tory ships engaged an enemy whilst Whig ships held their wind!" Times had changed since then. The Nile, Copenhagen, and Trafalgar had altered our naval tone, and made all things possible. Franklin felt as confident, on that 25th April, of reaching the Pacific as that there was his pendant fluttering from the truck of the Trent; and it was impossible to look at that bright eye lit up with enthusiasm, without feeling a kindred certainty of success. None thought of danger, all looked at the goal—the Pacific. The storms, the ice, the iron-bound shores of Greenland and Spitzbergen, were forgotten; all talked of the blue skies of the ocean with the gentle name, and of the orange groves of fair Otaheite. The Norse kings of old ne'er sailed with stouter hearts for the North, or raised braver shouts of Skoal! to the North-land Skoal! than did our bold countrymen on that fair April morn.

. . . . . .

Six months afterwards (Oct. 22), two weather-beaten brigs arrived from the North Sea; they were the Dorothea and Trent again—the former so shattered as to be no longer seaworthy, the latter almost as much damaged. Their tale was a wondrons one; men heard it with bated breath, and women thanked their God that such bold seamen had been spared.

Within a month after they left Greenwich, the vessels found themselves in a polar sea, strewn with ice-fields, and darkened with fogs, alternating with sudden storms. Franklin's vessel was discovered to be so leaky from some shipwright's carelessness, that half a watch of men were ever at the pumps! They wind on, however, and seek their way to the North until the grim mountains of Spitzbergen, clad in everlasting ice, rise above the horizon. Heavy snow-storms come on, with a bitter temperature; "*tons' weight*" of frozen snow-flakes, agglutinated by the freezing sea-spray, cover the vessels alow and aloft; the brigs are mere icebergs under sail; the very ropes become as thickly clad as pine-branches in a Siberian forest. The astonished but light-hearted crews laugh at the sight, while constantly removing with axes and shovels the masses of ice and snow which encumber their vessels and endanger the spars. Unable to proceed beyond Spitzbergen, they seek a harbour there, and thence issue twice again to battle with the polar ice. The vessels return to Magdalena Bay, each time more shattered from the unequal conflict.

On the last occasion God's providence and mercy alone saved all from total shipwreck and an awful death. The brigs are caught in a furious storm, and compelled

to heave-to under storm stay-sails. Next morning (June 30) the ice is seen along the lee, with a terrible sea beating upon it—a hopeless lee-shore indeed! Close-reefed sails are set in the hope of clearing the danger. Vain hope in such a sea, with such dull-sailing craft! Franklin, in the Trent, sees that Buchan, who was to leeward of him, cannot weather it, and that the Dorothea is about to take the desperate step of "taking the pack," a step resorted to only as a *dernier ressort*, in preference to falling, broadside on, into such a frightful scene of breakers and broken ice. God help them! was the involuntary cry of those on board the Trent, and the words were the more earnest that all felt the same fate would soon be their own. The Dorothea wore, and dashed before sea and wind towards what looked certain destruction; those in the Trent held their breath as they watched the daring exploit. The suspense lasted a moment only, for the vessel, like a snow-flake before the storm, was swept into the hideous scene of foam, spray, and tumbling fragments, which formed a wall impenetrable to mortal eyesight. Whether lost or saved, those on board the Trent would never know until they likewise were forced to take a step which seemed like rushing into the portals of certain death. Every hour convinced Franklin that such a measure was inevitable; and when he had made all ready, he gave, in decisive tones, the order to "put up the helm!"

"No language," says a powerful writer and eye-witness, the late Admiral Beechey, "can convey an adequate idea of the terrific grandeur of the effects produced by the collision of the ice and the tempestuous

ocean," or "of the great calmness and resolution of all our crew." As they near the frightful scene, Franklin glances quickly for one opening more promising than another. There is none; it is one long line of frightful breakers, immense blocks of ice heaving, rearing, and crashing against one another with a roar above which the loud voice of the gallant leader can scarcely be heard. On the crest of a huge wave the little Trent dashes herself into the scene of turmoil;—there is a frightful shock, the crew are flung upon the deck, and the masts bend like willow wands. "Hold on, for your lives, and stand to the helm, lads!" shouts the clear bold voice of him who had already faced death in many forms. "Ay, ay, sir!" is the cheery response from many a pale face but firm-set mouth. A roller dashes itself against the stern of the brig; she must be engulfed, or be forced ahead. God be praised! the gallant Trent forges ahead, but with a weak and staggering gait, every timber cracking, and the ship's bell tolling mournfully as if it were her requiem. Now, thrown broadside on, the floe-pieces threaten to beat in her side; then, tossed by the sea over ice-block after ice-block, it seemed indeed as if every minute would be her last. For some hours this trial of strength and fortitude endured—then the storm passed away, as speedily as it had set in: and apart from gratitude at their own providential escape, they joyed to see in the distance the gallant Dorothea still afloat and her crew in safety.

With broken timbers, sprung beams, and the Dorothea's larboard side forced in, both vessels exhibiting internally the fearful effects of the external shocks to

which they had been subjected, the shattered expedition returned to Spitzbergen. Franklin still urged that he might be allowed to proceed alone, whilst Buchan returned home with the Dorothea for repairs. Buchan, as senior officer, wisely ruled otherwise, and the two vessels returned to England, as we have already told.

Within a year we again find Lieutenant John Franklin returning to the frigid zone; but this time for boat exploration of the coasts of arctic America, to be reached overland by a journey through the Hudson Bay territory. In 1819 he left England, accompanied by Dr, the present Sir John, Richardson; Mr Back; Robert Hood, midshipman; and John Hepburn, an English seaman. They were heard of at long and uncertain intervals; and eventually, in 1822, all but poor Robert Hood returned to astonish their countrymen with the tale of their hardships, fortitude, and achievements. The narrative of Franklin's journey fully bears out the glowing eulogium of Sir John Barrow: "It adds," says Sir John, "another to the many splendid records of enterprise, zeal, and energy of our seamen; of that cool and intrepid conduct which never forsakes them on occasions the most trying—that unshaken constancy and perseverance in situations the most arduous, the most distressing, and sometimes the most hopeless, that can befall human beings; and it furnishes a beautiful example of the triumph of mental and moral energy over mere brute strength, in the simple fact that, out of fifteen individuals inured from their birth to cold, fatigue, and hunger, no less than ten (native landsmen) were so subdued by the aggravation of those evils to

which they had been habituated, as to give themselves up to indifference, insubordination, and despair, and finally to sink down and die; whilst of five British seamen, unaccustomed to the severity of the climate, and the hardships attending it, one only fell, and that one by the hands of an assassin. A light buoyant heart, a confidence in their own powers, supported by a firm reliance on a merciful Providence, never once forsook them, and brought them through such misery and distress as rarely, if ever, have been surmounted."

It is indeed a tale (I speak of Franklin's narrative) which should be in the hands of those sailors of England who desire to emulate the deeds and fame of such men as himself and his followers. It is an Iliad in prose, and replete with pictures of rare devotion to the most ennobling of causes, the advancement of human knowledge. A generous and chivalrous spirit breathes through every page, and sheds a lustre not only on every act of the leader, but likewise of those who were his comrades and friends in many a sad hour of need and danger. Those terrible marches; the laborious exploration of the regions around the mouths of the Mackenzie and Coppermine rivers; the long, bitter starvation of the winter; the murder of Hood; the destruction of the assassin and the cannibal; the intrepid effort of Richardson to swim across the freezing Coppermine to save his comrades; Back's fearful winter journey to bring succour to his chief;—are all tales which should be household words by every English fireside.

Franklin's safe return to England excited the most

enthusiastic public interest: his devotion and gallantry stamped him as no ordinary man in the estimation of his countrymen; and the Admiralty, having during his absence made him a commander, now promoted him to the rank of captain.

Thus, in twenty-two years, Franklin had achieved all that it was possible for energy and ability to win in his profession. He had acquired fame, and a captain's commission; henceforward the rules of the Royal Navy compelled him, as it has many other able men, to be content with the dull level of a seniority promotion to the rank of admiral. Yet Franklin was not disheartened; zeal for his country's fame, more than his own advancement, was the great secret of his professional success, and he longed again to be up and doing.

It was in 1823 that he married his first wife, Eleanor Porden. She seems largely to have partaken of the enterprising spirit of her husband; and when, within two short years (1825), Franklin stood by her side, and held in his hand the summons of his country to proceed upon another arctic expedition, and, with his heart overflowing with sorrow and pride, told her how sad the conflict between love for her and duty to his country and profession, noble Eleanor Porden thought not of self, though she knew the hand of death was already pressing her down to the land of long rest and silence, and that no more in this world would she meet her beloved husband. Forgetting self, she urged him bravely on to the fulfilment of the task his God and country had assigned him; and, with her weak and faltering hands, worked a flag which he was to spread to the winds, and

think of her at the moment when she proudly hoped he would reach the polar sea, that great step towards the North-West Passage—the guerdon for which England's naval chivalry then longed, and which this noble woman felt assured her beloved husband must one day win.

Thus, in this prosaic age, went forth again Captain John Franklin, in true knightly mood, to endure, labour, and accomplish much, but without achieving the darling object of his heart. He and his worthy steadfast friend and companion, Sir John Richardson, in open boats, enduring much peril and suffering, explored on this occasion sufficient of the coast of arctic America to assure all geographers, that along that shore would one day be discovered the long-sought passage to the Indies; and in 1827 they returned to receive again at the hands of their admiring countrymen all the honours that could be bestowed, and that they so well deserved.

Three years after the death of his first wife Eleanor, Franklin married Jane Griffin; and it is singular to observe how well Franklin placed his affections upon two women who, each in their sphere of action, stand forth as charming types of English wives. Eleanor Franklin dying, knowing that she never more may see the man she loves, urges him on to the execution of his duty, and enables Franklin to lay down, by his discoveries in arctic America, the foundation upon which he is hereafter to erect his own title to immortality in this world, —and Jane Franklin, better known as Lady Franklin, seventeen years subsequently, not only supports her heroic husband in the great wish of his gallant heart, but when, by God's decree, the secret of his success was

hidden from mortal ken, owing to the self-sacrifice of himself and comrades, she, the wife worthy of such a naval hero, steadfastly, earnestly laboured for eleven years, sacrificing health and patrimony to learn the history of her husband's fate; and, in spite of many failures, many disappointments, official rebuffs, and private hostility, though not without much sympathy, at last, God be thanked! worked out the great object of her woman's faith and love—that he indeed, John Franklin, had first discovered the long-sought North-West Passage, and had not lived, laboured, or died in vain.

CHAPTER III.

THE LAST VOYAGE OF FRANKLIN.

"And there they lay till all their bones were bleached
And lichened into colour with the crags."

—TENNYSON.

"THERE is yet one thing left undone whereby a great mind may become notable," wrote worthy Master Purchas, some two centuries ago: that one deed was the discovery of a north-west passage to the Indies. Long years afterwards the words of the good Dean of St Paul's sounded like a trumpet-call to his countrymen, and many an aspiring spirit essayed to do that deed whereby bright honour and immortality were to be won. The veil which hid from human ken the mysteries of the arctic zone, was not to be rent by one bold stroke; it was to be the test of British perseverance, patience, and hardihood. The frozen north would only reveal its wonders slowly and unwillingly to the brave men who devoted themselves to the task. The dread realms of frost and silence were only to be penetrated by the labours of two generations of seamen and travellers. The consummation of the discovery of the North-West Passage was to be obtained but by the self-sacrifice of a hundred heroes.

From 1815 to 1833 England sent forth her sons to the north in repeated expeditions by sea and land. The earnestness of many eminent public men, members of the Royal Society—such as Sir John Barrow and Sir Francis Beaufort—kept general interest directed to those regions in which Frobisher, Baffin, Davis, and Fox had so nobly ventured. There were no falterers; every call for volunteers was nobly responded to by officers of the Royal Navy; and John Franklin, Richardson, John and James Ross, Parry, Back, and King, with much devotion, toil, and suffering, forced open the portals beyond which the Elizabethan school of discoverers had not been able to penetrate, and added much to our knowledge of the geography and physical condition of the

arctic zone between Greenland and Behring Strait. Fifteen years of labour had failed, however, to solve the

question as to the actual existence of a water communication between the Pacific and Atlantic. Repeated disappointment had damped public zeal, and our charts were left in the above incomplete condition in the year 1836. Between 1838 and 1843, the success of Captain Sir James Ross, in an expedition to the antarctic pole with H.M.S. Erebus and Terror, as well as the completion of the northern coast-line of America by the Hudson Bay Company's servants, Dease and Simpson, caused the attention of the nation to again revert to its old channel —the North-West Passage. Anno Domini 1844 found England with a surplus revenue, a vast body of naval officers begging for employment, and eager for any opportunity of winning honours and distinction; and H.M.S. Erebus and Terror, safe and sound from the perils of antarctic seas, riding at anchor off Woolwich. All was most propitious for carrying out the darling object of the then venerable Secretary of the Admiralty. A mind like that of Sir John Barrow's, richly stored with the records of his country's glories in the exploration of every quarter of the globe, was keenly alive to the importance of keeping her still in the vanguard of geographical discovery: and it must be remembered that he had lived in a century when men, in spite of a long and terrible war, with all its glories and all its victories, were also yearly excited by the world-wide fame of the discoveries of Anson, Cook, Flinders, and Mungo Park. Was it not natural, therefore, that he, and such as he, should desire to add to those triumphs the achievement of the greatest geographical problem men ever undertook to solve?

The chart of the arctic regions was in the unsatisfactory condition shown on page 282.

How simple an undertaking it appeared, to connect the water in which Parry had sailed to Melville Island in 1819, with Dease and Simpson's easternmost position off the coast of America in 1838!

The summer of 1844 saw many an eager face poring over that arctic chart. Whisperings were heard that Sir John Barrow, Beaufort, Parry, Sabine, Ross, and Franklin himself, had expressed strong opinions in favour of another effort. The Royal Society, through its President the Marquess of Northampton, was known to have urged the resumption of arctic exploration upon the Government and Admiralty. Many an enthusiastic officer strove hard, by zeal and interest, to insure being one of those selected for the glorious work. Then it was that Fitzjames, and such men as Graham Gore, Fairholme, Hodgson, and Des Vœux, succeeded in enrolling themselves on the list of the chosen few who were next year to sail for the far north-west. We see them now, as they told us so, and with glistening eye prophesied their own success. Gallant hearts! they now sleep amidst the scenes of their sore trial, but triumphant discovery.

It was at one time intended that Fitzjames (whose genius and energy marked him as no ordinary officer) should command the expedition; but just at this time Sir John Franklin was heard to say that he considered the post to be his birthright as the senior arctic explorer in England. He had recently returned from his post as Governor of Van Diemen's Land: his sensitive and gen-

erous spirit chafed under the unmerited reatment he had experienced from the then Secretary of State for the Colonies; and, sick of civil employment, he naturally turned again to his profession, as a better field for the ability and devotion he had wasted on a thankless office. Sanguine of success, forgetful of past suffering, he claimed his right to command the latest, as he had led the earliest, of modern arctic expeditions.

Directly it was known that he would go if asked, the Admiralty were of course only too glad to avail themselves of the experience of such a man; but Lord Haddington, then First Lord, with that kindness which ever distinguished him, suggested that Franklin might well rest at home on his laurels. "I might find a good excuse for not letting you go, Sir John," said the peer, "in the tell-tale record which informs me that you are sixty years of age." "No, no, my lord," was Franklin's rejoinder, "I am only *fifty-nine!*" Before such earnestness all scruples yielded; the offer was officially made and accepted: to Sir John Franklin was confided the arctic expedition, consisting of H.M.S. Erebus, in which he hoisted his pendant, and H.M.S. Terror, commanded by Captain Crozier, who had recently accompanied Sir James Ross in his wonderful voyage to the antarctic seas.

The 18th of May 1845 found the Erebus and Terror at Greenhithe, in the Thames. On board of each ship there were sixty-nine officers and men. Every possible corner was carefully filled with stores and provisions—enough, they said, for three years; and, for the first time in arctic annals, these discovery-vessels each had auxili-

ary screws and engines of twenty-horse power. Hope rode high in every breast, and the cry of Hurrah for Behring Strait! succeeded their last hearty cheer as the gallant ships weighed on the morrow for Baffin Bay.

A month they sailed across the Atlantic before they reached their first halting-place, Disco, or the Whale Fish Islands, on the west coast of Greenland, in latitude 69° north. Thither a store-ship had accompanied them from England in order that the expedition might be completed with every necessary up to the latest moment before entering the polar ice. That voyage of thirty days had served to make the officers and men thoroughly acquainted with their chief, and with each other. Of him the warm-hearted Fitzjames writes: "That Sir John was delightful; that all had become very fond of him; and that he appeared remarkable for energetic decision in an emergency. The officers were remarkable for good feeling, good humour, and great talents; whilst the men were fine hearty sailors, mostly from the northern seaports." Love already, it is apparent, as much as duty, bound together the gallant hearts on board the Erebus and Terror.

Away from Disco they sped with all haste; the Bay of Baffin is fairly entered, and their long and arduous labours commence with an arctic tempest so severe, that their brother seamen of the store-ship, hastening homeward, thought with anxiety of the deep-laden Erebus and Terror. He who is strong to save guides the gallant barks, however, past the dangers of an iron-bound coast, and amongst the huge ghost-like icebergs which glimmer through the storm. We see them, in better weather,

urging under all sail their strong but clumsy ships before a favourable gale, along that coast of Greenland, every headland of which has its record of human trial and noble endurance. There the lofty headland of Sanderson-his-Hope (of a north-west passage) rears its crest of black granite, rich with crimson lichen, and crowned with snow. Norseman, and Dane, and Englishman, have alike sailed under its stupendous cliffs, or sought shelter in quaint Uppernavik which nestles at its feet. The Erebus and Terror may not delay. Greenland has no charms for men whose leader already talks sanguinely of the yet far distant Mackenzie and Coppermine rivers.

The floes and icebergs of the middle-ice now rise upon their sight; the northern horizon gleams with reflected light from the frozen surface of the sea; the south wind fails; the ships sail from the black mists and fog-laden atmosphere common to open water in the arctic regions, into the bright skies, smooth lanes, and mirror-like pools generally found amongst the pack during the summer season. The ice is streaming southward; the eager novices in either ship look forward with delight to the first onset with the foe they have come to do battle with. Wiser heads know that mother-wit will do more than dashing gallantry in the conflict with packed ice; the sails are taken in so as to reduce the speed, and the experienced ice-master from the crow's nest at the mast-head selects the weakest-looking point through which to force the ships into a lane of water that winds snake-like along the landward edge of the pack.

"So-ho! steady—steer her with a small helm, my lad!" bawls out, in strong north-country dialect, the

honest old ice-pilot, who has grown grey killing whales in Greenland. "Stand by to brail up the after-sails, if you please, sir; and to pack all the canvass upon her directly we break through the pack-edge," he urges to the officer of the watch. The churning and growling of the ice now strikes upon the ear, and at the same moment the Erebus and Terror take it manfully. There is a shock: for a second the pieces of ice hold their ground, but they yield to the weight of the ships; one mass tilts up and slips over another, another sinks under the bows, and is heard scraping along the bottom of the ship; the road is opening. "Hard up with the helm!" shouts the ice-master, and at the same time the sail is set forward to urge the ship faster through the pack; the speed accelerates, and in a few minutes they are fairly in the ice. We need not follow them in their daily labour. Ice is now on every hand: open water scarce. The crews often drag the ships for hours with ropes, along the edge of the land-floe, that is still fast to the face of the glacier which curves round Melville Bay. Now we see them perfectly beset, the vessels secured to the lowest icebergs that can be found. They studiously avoid those lofty masses which, with spires and domes and steeples, resemble huge cathedrals of crystal—for they know that such icebergs are prone to turn over, or break up suddenly, and would infallibly crush any ship that might be near them.

For a while our discovery-ships met the whaling-vessels of Aberdeen and Hull, striving, like themselves, to get through the ice-stream into the clear waters of Ponds Bay. On July 26th they part company from the

last of them, and pursue their solitary course alone. Again they pass from the northern edge of the pack into open water—if such may be called an open sea, where icebergs are strewn plentifully. The course is now shaped for Lancaster Sound. August has set in. The sun, which has hitherto wheeled round the heavens without setting, again commences to dip below the horizon. Its nightly absence and declining power are marked by the new formation of thin, glass-like ice, known as bay-ice. The south wind freshens; the Erebus and Terror press on, staggering in a heavy sea, all the more remarkable that a hundred miles of ice have just been passed through behind them. The great entrance of Lancaster-his-Sound breaks out of the clouds to the westward. Capes Warrender and Hay frown grimly over the angry sea, backed by lofty mountain-ranges, whose dark precipices, streaked with snow, look as if they were formed of steel and inlaid with silver.

"On, on! to the westward!" is the cry. Why need to stop and erect cairns, and deposit records of their progress? Do they not intend to pass into the Pacific next year? Have not they ordered their letters to be directed to Petropaulovskoi and the Sandwich Isles? Why lose one precious hour at the threshold of their labour?

The ice is again seen. It extends along the southern side of Barrow Strait, and is streaming out into Baffin Bay. The ships haul in for the coast of North Devon. The scene changes considerably from what our explorers have seen in Greenland. No glaciers stretch from the interior, and launch their long, projecting tongues into the sea; no icy cliffs reflect there the colours of the

emerald and turquoise; arctic vegetation, wretched as it is, does not gladden the eyesight in even the most favoured spots. They have passed from a region of primary rock into one of magnesian limestone. Greenland is a paradise, in an arctic point of view, to the land they have now reached. It is desolation's abiding-place; yet not deficient in the picturesque. The tall and escarped cliffs are cut by action of frost and thaws into buttresses and abutments, which, combined with broken castellated summits, give a Gothic-like aspect to the shores of North Devon. Valleys and plains are passed, all of one uniform dun colour; they consist simply of barren limestone. The sterility of the land is, however, somewhat compensated for by the plentiful abundance of animal life upon the water. The seal, the whale, and the walrus are there; whilst wild-fowl in large flocks feed in calm spots under beetling cliffs, or in shallow lakes which can be looked down upon from the mast-head.

It is not far to the entrance of Wellington Channel; they reach Beechey Island, and mark the value of the bay within it as a wintering-place, and its central position with respect to the channels leading towards Cape Walker, Melville Island, or Regent Inlet. Ice again impedes their progress. Their first instructions from the Admiralty were to try to the south-west from Cape Walker. They cannot now advance in that direction, for it is a hopeless block of heavy floes; but Wellington Channel is open, and smiles and sparkles in blue and sunlit waves, as if luring them to the north-west. Why not try a north-about passage round the Parry Islands? urges Fitzjames. Franklin agrees with him that any-

thing is better than delay, and at any rate they determine to explore it, and ascertain whither it led. Away they press northward, until what is now known as Grinnell Land rises ahead, and they have to turn more to the west. From Wellington Channel they pass between Baillie Hamilton Island and the striking cliffs of Cape Majendie into Penny Strait.

Eager eyes are straining from the mast-head; is it a mere bay, or is it a channel they are sailing through? "Water, water!—large water!" replies the ice-master from his eyrie to the anxious queries of the veteran leader. Away, away they press!—every studding-sail alow and aloft. The old ships never went so fast before—no, not on that great day in their history when they were the first to sail along the Victoria continent of the southern pole. From 74½° to 77° north latitude they pushed up this noble strait, but not, as they hoped, to reach an open or navigable sea, but to find, as we found in 1852, a wide expanse of water, much choked up with ice, extending from the head of Wellington Channel far to the westward for hundreds of miles. Baffled, but not beaten, the prows of the stout ships are again turned southward, and, aided by a greater share of success than has fallen to the lot of those who have come after Sir John Franklin in those same quarters, the gallant Erebus and Terror sailed down a channel which he discovered to exist between Cornwallis and Bathurst Islands, and entered Barrow Strait at a point nearly due north of Cape Walker. In that direction Franklin was now constrained to alone look for a route whereby to reach the sea off the coast of North America.

It was well known that this southern course was that of his predilection, founded on his judgment and experience. There are many in England who can recollect him pointing on his chart to the western entrance of Simpson Strait and the adjoining coast of North America, and saying, "If I can but get down there, my work is done; thence it's all plain sailing to the westward."

Franklin might well say this, since he and Richardson had explored nearly all that coast of arctic America towards Behring Strait.

The fortnight, however, which had been spent in Wellington Channel, was the short period of navigation common to the ice-choked seas within Lancaster Sound. September and an arctic autumn broke upon them. Who that has navigated those seas can ever forget the excitement and danger of the autumn struggle with ice, snow-storm, and lee-shores? We see those lonely barks in the heart of a region which appears only to have been intended to test man's enterprise, and to show him, that, after all, he is but a poor weak creature. Channels surround them in all directions, down and up which, let the wind blow from any quarter, an avalanche of broken floes and ugly packed ice rolls, and threatens to engulf all that impedes its way, checked alone by the isles which strew Barrow Strait, and serve, like the teeth of a harrow, to rip up and destroy the vast ice-fields as they are launched against them. Around each island, as well as along the adjacent coasts, and especially at projecting capes and headlands, mountains of floe-pieces are piled mass on top of mass, as if the frozen sea would invade the frozen land. The Erebus and Terror, under the

skilful hands of their noble ships' companies, flit to and fro; seek shelter first under one point and then another. Franklin, Crozier, and Fitzjames are battling to get into Peel Channel, between Capes Walker and Bunny. The nights are becoming rapidly longer, the temperature often falls fifteen degrees below freezing-point, the pools of water on the great ice-fields, as well as on the land, are again firmly frozen over. The wild-fowl and their offspring are seen hastening south; the plumage of the ptarmigan and willow grouse is already plentifully sprinkled with white; the mountain-tops and ravines are loaded with snow, which will not melt away for twelve long months. Enough has been done to satisfy Franklin that a further advance this season will be impossible. Winter-quarters must be sought; there is none nearer that they know of than Beechey Island; the Erebus and Terror bear away for it. Fortune favours them, and they are not caught in the fatal grip of the winter-pack, and drifted out into the Atlantic, as many subsequent voyagers have been. Their haven is reached, and with hearty cheers the ships are warped into Erebus and Terror Bay, and arrangements rapidly made to meet the coming winter of 1845-46.

CHAPTER IV.

"Oh, though oft depressed and lonely,
All my fears are laid aside,
If I but remember only
Such as these have lived and died."
—LONGFELLOW.

UNDER the friendly shelter of Beechey Island, Franklin and his followers reposed from their arduous labours of 1845, and looked forward confidently to the success which must now attend their efforts in the following year. And they had reason to be confident! Did they not know that, in their remarkable voyage up Wellington Channel and down the new strait, west of Cornwallis Island, they had explored *three hundred miles* of previously unknown channels leading to the north-west? Could they not point to Cape Walker, and say, "Assuredly it will be an easy task next season to push our ships over the *two hundred and fifty miles* of water which only intervene between Cape Walker and King William Land"? Of course they thought thus. And that their hopes were fulfilled, though they lived not to tell us so, we now know, alas! too well.

The polar winter came in upon them like a giant—it ever does so. No alternate frost and thaw, sunshine and gloom, there delays the advent of the winter.

Within the frigid zone each season steps upon sea and earth to the appointed day, with all its distinctive characteristics strongly marked. In one night, winter strikes nature with its mailed hand, and silence, coldness, death, reign supreme. The soil and springs are frozen adamant: the streamlet no longer trickles from aneath the snow-choked ravines: the plains, slopes, and terraces of this land of barrenness are clad in winter livery of dazzling white; the adjacent seas and fiords can hardly be distinguished from the land, owing to the uniformity of colour. A shroud of snow envelops the stricken region, except where, sharp and clear against the hard blue sky, stand out the gaunt mountain precipices of North Devon and the dark and frowning cliffs of Beechey Island—cliffs too steep for even snow-flake to hang upon. There they stand, huge ebon giants, brooding over the land of famine and suffering spread beneath their feet!

Day after day, in rapidly diminishing arcs, the sun at noon approaches the southern edge of the horizon. It is the first week of November, and we see a goodly array of officers and men issue from the ships, and proceed to scale the heights of the neighbouring island: they go to bid the bright sun good-bye until February 1846. At noon the upper edge of the orb gleams like a beacon-fire for a few minutes over the snow-enveloped shores of North Somerset—and it is gone—leaving them to three months of twilight and darkness. Offering up a silent, fervent prayer for themselves, who were standing there to see that sunset, and for their shipmates in the ice-beset barks at their feet, that they might all be spared to welcome back the life-imparting planet, we see these

pilgrims from the Erebus and Terror turn back and descend into the darkness and gloom now hanging over their winter quarters.

The tale of energetic battle, with cold privation and festering monotony, has been told. Why repeat that the officers and men under Franklin, in their first winter within the frozen zone, as nobly bore the one and cheerfully combated the other? The ruins and traces left behind them all attest it. The observatory, with its double embankment of earth and stones, its neat finish, and the lavish expenditure of labour in pavement and pathway; the shooting-gallery under the cliff, the seats formed of stones, the remains of pleasant picnics in empty bottles and meat-tins strewed about; the elaborate cairn upon the north point of Beechey—a pyramid eight feet high, and at least six feet long on each side of the base—constructed of old meat-tins filled with gravel;—all tell the same tale of manful endeavours, by physical employment, to distract the mind from suffering and solitude. On board the ships we picture to ourselves the arctic school and theatre—the scholar and dramatist exerting themselves to kill monotony and amuse or instruct their comrades. There are not wanting traces at Cape Riley to show how earnestly the naturalists Goodsir and Stanley laboured to collect specimens: now was their time to arrange and note upon their labours. There is more than one site still visible of tents in which the magnetical observations were obtained: now was the time to record and compare such observations. And, in addition to the wondrous novelty of a first winter in the frozen sea, the officers in so scientific an expedition had

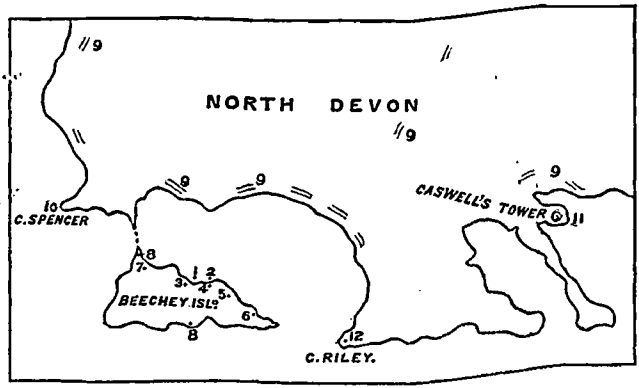
abundance of employment in noting the various phenomena which were daily and hourly occurring around them.

But at length darkness and winter pass away, sunlight and spring return; pale faces again recover their natural rosy tint. Only three of the original party of one hundred and thirty-eight souls have succumbed;* the rest, though thinner, are now inured and hardened to all the changes of the arctic climate, and exhibit no lack of energy or strength. As soon as the temperature will admit of it, parties are despatched from the ships in various directions with sledges and tents: some have scientific objects in view; others are directed to try and procure game for their sickly comrades, or to eke out the store of provisions, now reduced to a two years' stock; and, sad it is to record it, nearly all their preserved meats were those of the miscreant Goldner.

Exploratory parties were likewise not wanting; and we who came on their footsteps in after years saw the signs of our lost comrades' zeal and industry on every side. From Caswell's Tower, which looks towards Lancaster Sound, to Point Innis up Wellington Channel, the marks of encamping-places and the trails of their sledges were frequent. It was sad to remark, from the form of their cooking-places, and the deep ruts left by their sledges over the edge of the terraces which abound in Beechey

* All the traces alluded to, as well as those delineated in the accompanying engraving, were discovered at and about Beechey Island, in 1850-51, by the expeditions under Captain H. Austin, C.B., Captain Penny, and Captain de Haven. The tombstones recorded the deaths of two seamen on January 1 and January 4, 1846, and that of a marine, who died on April 3 of the same year.

Island, how little Franklin's people were impressed with the importance of rendering their travelling equipment



1, 2. Ships.
3. Store.
4. Graves and Forge.
5. Washing-place.
6. Shooting-gallery.
7. Garden.
8. Cairns.
9. Sledge-marks.
10. Shooting-station.
11. Cairns.
12. Traces of station for Naturalists.

TRACES LEFT AT FRANKLIN'S FIRST WINTER-QUARTERS IN 1845-46.

light and portable, both as a means of exploration whilst their ships were imprisoned, and to enable them to escape if their ships were destroyed. The anxiety for their fate expressed by all of us in Captain Austin's expedition, when we observed the fearful expenditure of labour which must have been entailed on Franklin's men in dragging about such sledges as they had evidently had with them, has only been too truly verified. The longest journey made by sledge-parties from the Erebus

and Terror at Beechey Island, so far as we know, did not exceed *twenty* miles. Franklin's experience of travelling in the Hudson Bay Territory was evidently at fault in the rugged and desert region in which he was now sojourning; and he had no M'Clintock at his side to show him how, by mechanical skill and careful attention to weights and equipment, sledges might be constructed on which men might carry boats, tents, clothing, food, and fuel, and travel with impunity from February to August, and explore, as he himself has done in that time, nearly fourteen hundred miles of ground or frozen sea.

However, no anxieties then pressed on the minds of Franklin's crews; "large water" was all they thought of; give them that, and Behring Strait in their ships was still their destination.

The sun had ceased to set, night is as the day, the snow has long melted off land and floe, the detached parties have all returned to their ships; yards are crossed, rigging set up, sails bent, the graves of their shipmates are neatly paved round, shells from the bay are prettily arranged over the sailor's last home by some old messmate. Franklin, with that Christian earnestness which ever formed so charming a trait in his character, selects, at the request of his men, epitaphs which appeal to the hearts of all, and perhaps no finer picture could be conceived than that firm and veteran leader leading his beloved crews on to the perilous execution of their worldly duty, yet calmly pointing to that text of Holy Writ in which the prophet-warrior of old reminded his people of their God, "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve."

The garden constructed on Beechey Island refuses to yield any vegetables from the seeds brought out from England, and so carefully sown in it; but the officers have brought and transplanted within its border every tuft of saxifrage and pretty anemone and poppy which the neighbourhood affords. The pale pink of the one and delicate straw-colour of the other form the only pleasing relief from the monotonous colouring of the barren land. Sportsmen return and declare the game to be too wild for farther sport, but cheer all by saying that the deer and hare have changed their coats from white to russet colour; the ptarmigan's brood have taken wing, the wild duck has long since led her callow young to the open lakes, or off to "holes of water," which are rapidly increasing under cliffs and projecting headlands—all the signs denote that the disruption of the frozen surface of the sea is at hand.

The day of release arrives: in the morning a *black* sky has been seen from the look-out station over the eastern portion of Barrow Strait; that, together with a low barometer, indicates a S.E. breeze. The cracks which radiate over the floes in every direction gradually widen, then close again, and form "heavy nips," in which the fearful pressure occasions a dull grinding noise. Presently the look-out man on Beechey Island throws out the signal. The floes are in motion! A loud hurrah welcomes the joyful signal—a race for the point to see the destruction of the ice. It moves indeed. A mighty agency is at work; the floes heave and crack—now press fearfully in one direction, and then in another. Occasionally the awful pressure acting horizontally upon a huge floe-piece

makes it, though ten feet thick, curve up in a dome-like shape; a dull moaning is heard as if the very ice cried mercy, and then, with a sharp report, the mass is shivered into fragments, and hurled up one on top of the other. Water rapidly shows in all directions, and within twenty-four hours there is quite as much clear sea seen as there was of ice yesterday. Yet the ice-fields in bays and inlets are still fast. This is called the land-floe, and in that of Beechey Island the ships are still fast locked; but anticipating such would be the case during all the spring-time, men have been carefully sprinkling ashes, sand, and gravel over the ice in a straight line from the Erebus and Terror to the entrance of the bay. The increased action of the sun upon these foreign substances has occasioned a rapid decay of the floe beneath them, and it now only needs a little labour to extricate the expedition.

"Hands, cut out ships!" pipes the hearty boatswain. A hundred strong hands and a dozen ice-saws are soon at work, whilst loud song and merriment awaken the long silent echoes of Beechey Island. The water is reached, the sail is made, the ships cast to the westward, and again they speed towards Cape Walker.

If we open a chart of the arctic regions, it will be observed that *westward* of the Parry Islands and Baring Island there is a wide sea whose limits are as yet unknown, and the ice which encumbers it has never yet been traversed by ship or sledge. All those navigators, Collinson and M'Clure in their ships, and M'Clintock and Mecham with their sledges, who have with much difficulty and danger skirted along the southern and

eastern edge of this truly frozen sea, mention, in terms of wonderment, the stupendous thickness and massive proportions of the vast floes with which it is closely packed. It was between this truly polar ice and the steep cliffs of Banks Land that Sir Robert M'Clure fairly fought his way in the memorable voyage of the Investigator. It was in the narrow and tortuous lane of water left between the low beach-line of North America and the wall of ice formed by the grounded masses of this fearful pack that the gallant Collinson carried, in 1852 and 1853, the Enterprise by way of Behring Strait to and from the farther shores of Victoria Land; and it was in the far north-west of the Parry group that M'Clintock and Mecham, with their sledges in 1853, gazed, as Parry had done five-and-thirty years before, with astonishment on that pack-ice to which all they had seen in the seas between Prince Patrick Land and the Atlantic was a mere bagatelle.* It is not that the cold is here more intense, or that the climate is more rigorous; but this accumulation of ponderous ice arises simply from the want of any large direct communication between that portion of the polar sea and the warm waters of the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans. Behring Strait is the only vent in a south-westerly direction, and that strait is so shallow that this polar ice (which has been found to draw as much as sixty and eighty feet of water, and to have hummocks upon it of a hundred feet in height) generally grounds in it, until thawed away by the action of the Pacific gulf-stream; and, on the other hand, towards the Atlantic Ocean, the channels, as

* See map at page 333.

it will be observed, are most tortuous and much barred with islands. The grand law of nature by which the ice of our northern pole is ever flowing towards the torrid zone, holds good, however, within the area to which we are alluding; and in spite of all obstacles, and although the accumulation of ice every winter exceeds the discharge and destruction, still the action is ever southerly, as in the seas of Spitzbergen and Novaia Zemlia. The slow march of this ice-stream is, however, far more like that of the ice from some huge parent glacier than of anything else, for lanes of water, or clear spaces of sea, are seldom, if ever, seen amongst it; indeed, so compact, so impenetrable is its character, that as yet no navigator has ever succeeded in crossing any of the ice-streams from this sea of desolation.

One of these impenetrable ice-streams flows down between Melville and Banks Land, and, impinging with fearful force upon the exposed western shores of Prince of Wales Land and the islands across Barrow Strait, curves down what is now called M'Clintock Channel, until it is fairly blocked up in the strait between King William and Victoria Land. Here the southern edge of the ice-stream comes in contact with the warm waters flowing northward from the rivers of the continent of America, and undergoes a constant and rapid disintegration, the rear of the ice-stream ever pressing forward, yet constantly melted away* as it reaches the limit which Providence has set upon it.

* Taking the drift of the lost Erebus and Terror, from September 1846 to April 1848, as our guide, this ice-stream moves at about the rate of a mile and a half in a month.

As Franklin sailed to the west from Beechey Island, he fell upon the edge of this ice-stream in about the longitude of Cape Walker; then to the west of it, and of Lowther, Young, and Hamilton Islands, he observed the floes being broken up, and rapidly disintegrated by meeting the warm waters of Barrow Strait; but within and amongst that pack there could have been no hope of a passage; whilst, on the other hand, the ridges of pressed-up shingle and off-lying shoals round the land west of Cape Walker threatened destruction to the Erebus and Terror if they attempted that route; whereas, as far as they could look southward between Capes Walker and Bunny, there stretched away a fair and promising channel leading direct to the American continent, and with ice in it of no very aged appearance. Who that has stood as they did on Cape Walker can doubt which route Franklin preferred under such circumstances?

The middle of August and a fortnight of navigation are before them. "A lead! a lead! and large water! away to the south," calls the ice-master from the crow's nest; and from under the friendly shelter of Cape Walker the expedition bears away, and they progress apace down what we know as Peel Channel. On the eastern hand rise the steep black cliffs of North Somerset, cut here and there with deep cleft and snow-filled ravine; along the base a ridge of ice is piled up full forty feet high; it gleams in white and blue against the granite cliff, and is reflected in the calm waters of an arctic summer's day—how still, how calm, how sublimely grand!—but the experienced seaman is not beguiled by the deceptive beauty of such a scene, but thinks of the

dark and stormy nights when—and that before many short days are past—the north-west hurricane will again launch against those cliffs the ice-fields of Melville Strait. On the western hand, the sandstone cliffs and sheltered coves of Prince of Wales Land have donned their brightest looks, and, siren-like, lure the discoverer, by many an unexplored bay and fiord, to delay a while and visit them. It may not be: the Erebus and Terror press on, for Cape Herschel of King William Land and the American continent are ahead. They are fast nearing it! Once there, they will have discovered the long-sought North-West Passage! They will have done that "one thing whereby great minds may become notable." Two degrees of latitude are passed over: the passage contracts: for a while it looks as if they were in a *cul-de-sac:* islands locked in with one another excite some anxiety for a channel. The two ships are close to each other: the eager officers and men crowd gunwale and tops. Hepburn Island bars the way: they round it. Hurrah! hurrah! the path opens before them; the lands on either recede, as sea, an open sea, is before them. They dip their ensigns, and cheer each other in friendly congratulation. Joy, joy! another one hundred miles, and King William Land will rise in view. The prize is now within their grasp, whatever be the cost.

The sailors' prayer for open water is, however, only granted in a limited sense, for directly the coast of Prince of Wales Island is lost to view, and that they are no longer shielded by land to the west, the great ice-stream from Melville Island is again fallen in with. The Erebus

and Terror pass a channel leading into Regent's Inlet, now called Bellot Channel: they advance down the edge of that ice-stream as far as latitude 71°. The only passage to the coast of America that Franklin knows of is now nearly south-west of his position: it leads between King William and Victoria Land. For, alas! in his chart King William Land (see p. 282) was represented to be connected with Boothia by a deep bay, called Poet Bay. It is true that to the south-west a hopeless-looking ice-stream bars his way, and that to the south-east the road looks clear and promising; but then, did not his chart say that there was no channel east of King William Land by which to reach the American shore? There was no alternative: they must enter the pack or ice-stream, and go with it to the south-west.

Had they not already passed over two hundred out of the three hundred miles between Cape Walker and Cape Herschel? Were they the men to flinch from a struggle for the remaining hundred miles? That struggle commenced as the winter closed in, and just as King William Land was in sight, the Erebus and Terror became beset, and eventually fixed for the winter of 1846-7 in latitude 70° 5′ north, and longitude 98° 23′ west, about twelve miles due north of Cape Felix.* More dangerous and unpromising winter-quarters could hardly have fallen to their lot, but they were helpless in that ice-stream.

Sixteen years previously Sir James Ross had stood upon Cape Felix. He had travelled on foot in the early spring of 1830 from Victoria Harbour, in the Gulf of

* See the record discovered on King William Land by Captain M'Clintock.

Boothia, and explored the northern coast of King William Land, and, standing on the 29th of May on this very Cape Felix, remarked with astonishment the fearful nature of the oceanic ice which was pressed up upon the shores; and he mentions that in some places the pressure had driven the floes inland half a mile beyond the highest tide mark! Such the terrible winter-quarters of those lone barks and their gallant crews; and if that season of monotony and hardship had been trying to them in Beechey Island, where they could in some measure change the scene by travelling in one direction or the other, how infinitely more so it must have been with nothing round them but ice-hummock and floe-piece, with the ships constantly subjected to pressure and ice-nip, and the crews often threatened during the depth of winter with the probability of having their ships swallowed up in an arctic tempest.

The God of storms, however, who lashes the wintry north with His might, shielded those brave men; and, inured to the dangers of icy seas, they slept and laboured not less pleasantly because the floes were rocking their wooden homes; and consoled themselves that they were only then ninety miles from Cape Herschel, and that any sledge-party could reach it next spring (1847) before the navigation would be open.

Thus their second winter passes. King William Land shows out here and there from its winter livery; for evaporation serves to denude those barren lands of snow long before any thaw takes place. May comes in; the unsetting sun in dazzling splendour pours its flood of perpetual light over the broken, shattered blocks of ice

which form this truly polar ice-stream; drops of water trickle down the sides of the weather-beaten ships, and icicles hang pendant from the edge of hummocks; yet it is still intensely cold in the shade. Lieutenant Graham Gore, and Mr F. Des Vœux, mate, both of the Erebus, are about to leave the ships for the land. They have six men with them. Why do all grasp them so fervently by the hand? Why do even the sick come up to give them a parting cheer? Surely they went forth to bring back the assurance that the expedition was really in the direct channel leading to those waters traversed in former years by Franklin; and to tell them all that they really were the Discoverers of the long-sought Passage—the guerdon for all their toil, risk, and suffering!

A record was left by Gore and Des Vœux, in a cairn beyond Cape Victory, on the west coast of King William Land: it has been discovered, and tells us that, "on May 24th, 1847, all were well on board the ships, and that Sir John Franklin still commanded." Graham Gore probably traversed the short distance between his cairn and that on Cape Herschel in a week; and we can fancy him and the enthusiastic Des Vœux casting one glance upon the longed-for shores of America, and hastening back to share their delight with those imprisoned in the ships.

Alas! why do their shipmates meet the flushed travellers with sorrow imprinted on pale countenances! Why, as they cheer at the glad tidings they bring, does the tear suffuse the eye of these rough and hardy men? Their chief lies on his deathbed; a long career of honour is drawing to its close. The shout of victory, which

cheered the last hour of Nelson and of Wolfe, rang not less heartily round the bed of the gallant Franklin, and lit up that kind eye with its last gleam of triumph. Like them, his last thought must have been of his country's glory, and the welfare of those who he well knew must now hope in vain for his return.

A toll for the brave—the drooping ensigns of England trail half-mast; officers and men with sad faces walk lightly, as if they feared to disturb the mortal remains of him they loved so much. The solemn peal of the ship's bell reverberates amongst the masses of solid ice: a group of affectionate followers stand round a huge chasm amongst the ice-stream, and Fitzjames, who had sworn only to part from him in death, reads the service for the dead over the grave of Franklin.

Oh, mourn him not! unless ye can point to a more honourable end or a nobler grave. Like another Moses, he fell when his work was accomplished, with the long object of his life in view. Franklin, the discoverer of the North-West Passage, had his Pisgah, and so long as his countrymen shall hold dear disinterested devotion and gallant perseverance in a good cause, so long shall they point to the career and fate of this gallant sailor.

. . . . . .

The autumn comes. It is not without anxiety that Crozier and Fitzjames contemplate the prospect before them; but they keep those feelings to themselves. The Pacific is far off; the safe retreat of their men up the Great Fish River, or Coppermine, is fraught with peril, unless their countrymen at home have established depôts

of provisions at their embouchures; and, worse still, the stock of food embarked in the ships will fail next year, and scurvy is already showing itself amongst the crews. At last the ice-stream moves—it swings to and fro—the vessels are thrown into one position of danger and then another. Days elapse—ah! they count the hours before winter will assuredly come back; and how they pray for water—water to float the ships in; only one narrow lane through this hard-hearted pack—one narrow lane for ninety miles, and they are saved! but if not . . . Thy will be done!

The ice-stream moves south, but slowly—the men fear to remark to each other how slowly; the motion of a glacier down the Alpine pass is scarcely less perceptible. Yet it *does* move south, and they look to heaven and thank their God. Ten miles, twenty miles, are passed over, still beset; not a foot of open water in sight, yet still they drift to the south. Thirty miles are now accomplished; they have only sixty miles of ice between them and the sea, off the American coast—nay, less; for only let them get round that west extreme of King William Land, which is seen projecting into the ice-stream, and they are saved!

September 1847 has come in. The new ice is forming fast; the drift of the ice-stream diminishes,—can it have stopped? Mercy! mercy! It sways to and fro; gaunt, scurvy-stricken men watch the daily movement with bated breath; the ships have ceased to drift; they are now fifteen miles north of Cape Victory. God in His mercy shield those gallant crews! The dread winter of 1847-48 closes around these forlorn and now desperate

men;—disease and scurvy, want and cold, now indeed press them heavily. Brave men are suffering; we will not look upon their sore trial.

. . . . . .

The sun of 1848 rises again upon the imprisoned expedition, and never did it look down on a nobler yet sadder sight. Nine officers and twelve men have perished during the past season of trial; the survivors, one hundred and four in number, are assembled round their leaders — Crozier and Fitzjames — a wan, half-starved crew. Poor souls! they are going to escape for their lives by ascending the Great Fish River. Fitzjames, still vigorous, conceals his fears of ever saving so many in the hunger-stricken region they have to traverse. As the constant friend and companion of Franklin, he knows but too well, from the sad experiences of his lamented chief, what toil, hardship, and want await them before a country capable of supporting life can be reached. All that long last winter has he pored over the graphic and touching tale of Franklin's overland journeys in arctic America, and culled but small hope. Yet he knows there is no time for despondency; the men look to their officers for hope and confidence at such a juncture, and shall he be wanting at such a crisis? No, assuredly not; and he strives hard, by kind and cheering words, to impart new courage to many a drooping heart. The fresh preserved provisions on board the ships have failed; salted meat is simply poison to the scurvy-stricken men; they must quit the ships or die; and, if they must die, is it not better that they should do so making a last gallant struggle for life?—at any rate, they can leave their

bleaching skeletons as a monument upon Cape Herschel of having successfully done their duty.

They then pile up their sledges with all description of gear; for as yet they know not how much their strength has diminished. Each ship's company brings a large whale-boat which has been carefully fitted upon a sledge; in them the sick and disabled are tenderly packed; each man carries a great quantity of clothing. Care is taken to have plenty of guns, powder, and shot; for they can drag at the utmost but forty days' provisions with them, and at the expiration of that time they hope to be in a country where their guns will feed them. Every trinket and piece of silver in the ships is carefully divided amongst the men; they intend to conciliate the natives with these baubles, or to procure food; and so far as foresight could afford the party some hope of safety, nothing has been forgotten. But one fatal error occurred —the question of weight to be dragged, with diminished physical power, has never been taken into consideration; or, if considered, no proper remedy applied.

On the 22d of April 1848 these gallant men fell into the drag-ropes of their sledges and boats; the colours were hoisted on their dear old ships, hearty cheers were given for the stout craft that had borne them so nobly through many perils; and without a blush—for there was no cause for it—at deserting her Majesty's ships Erebus and Terror, Captains Crozier and Fitzjames lead the road to the nearest point of land, named Cape Victory.*

* So called by Captain Sir James Ross in his exploration of 1830. It was the farthest point reached on King William Land by that distinguished arctic traveller.

Poor souls! they were three days traversing the intervening distance of fifteen miles, and the sad conviction was already pressing upon them, that they had over-estimated their physical strength and powers of endurance. Around the large cairn erected upon Point Victory the shivering diseased men cast away everything that could be spared; indeed perhaps much that, at that inclement season, they still needed to shield their half-starved frames from the biting blast; besides which, shovels, rope, blocks, clothing, stores of all sorts, sextants, quadrants, oars, and even a medicine-case, were here thrown away. Unrolling the record left on this spot in the previous year by Lieutenant Graham Gore, Captain Fitzjames proceeded to write round its margin those few—alas! too few—but graphic words, which tell us all we shall ever know of this last sad page in their touching history. The ink had to be thawed by fire, and benumbed must the hand have been that wrote those words; yet the writing is that of the same firm, self-reliant, light-hearted man, who, three short years previously, had been noted at Greenhithe as the life of the expedition.

In spite of frostbites and fatigue, the party presses on. They *must* keep marching southward towards the mainland where they hope to find deer and salmon, for upon their sledges they have only got forty days' provision, and that store will be expended by the 7th of June, at latest.* How are they to live after that? is a sad

* It is well known by the experience of arctic travellers that forty days is the maximum quantity of food, in addition to other weights, that the best-equipped party could have dragged on their sledges; and as the Great Fish River was known not to open before August,

thought which flashes across the mind of many. They sigh, but will not impart their anxieties to each other. Seamen-like, the light joke and merry laugh still flash from mouth to mouth, and seem for the while to lighten the poor heart of its load of misery.

Poor lost ones! we mark them day by day growing weaker under the fearful toil of dragging such ponderous sledges and boats, as well as their disabled comrades, through the deep snow and over rugged ice; we hear the cheering appeal of the gallant officers to the despairing ones, the kind applause heartily bestowed on the self-sacrificing and the brave. Bodily endurance has its limits, devotion to one's brother man its bounds; and half-way between Cape Victory, where they landed, and Cape Herschel, it becomes apparent that if any are to be saved there must be a division of the party, and that the weak and disabled must stay behind or return to the ships. One of the large boats is here turned with her bow northward; some stay here, the rest push on. Of those who thus remained, or tried to return, all we know is, that in long years afterwards, two skeletons were found in that boat, and that the wandering Esquimaux found on board one ship the bones of another "large man with big bones," as they described him. On the fate of the rest of the sick and weak—and they must have formed a large proportion of the original party of 106 souls that landed on Cape Victory—we need not dwell.

it must have been dire necessity alone that induced Crozier and Fitzjames to quit their ships at so early a period of the year that nearly six weeks must have intervened between the expenditure of the provisions upon their sledges and the disruption of the ice upon the Great Fish River.

The rest push on: they have tried to cheer their shipmates with the vain hope that they will yet return to save them—vain hope! Yet we see them with bending bodies, and with the sweatdrops freezing upon their pallid faces, straining every nerve to save sweet life. They pass from sight into the snow-storm which the warm south wind kindly sends to shroud the worn-out ones, who gently lie down to die; and they died so peacefully, so calmly, with the mind sweetly wandering back to the homes and friends of their childhood, the long-remembered prayer upon their lips, and their last fleeting thoughts of some long-treasured love for one they would one day meet in heaven. The cairn on Cape Herschel was reached—no one had been there since "Dease and Simpson" in 1839, except themselves. Here the last record was placed of their success and sad position, and then this forlorn hope of desperate men pushed on towards the Great Fish River; and, if we needed any proof of Franklin's Expedition having been the "first to discover the North-West Passage," or of the utter extremity to which this retreating party was reduced, we need but point to the bleaching skeleton which lies a few miles southward of Cape Herschel; that silent witness has been accorded us, and he still lies as he fell, on his face, with his head towards his home. His comrades had neither turned nor buried him. But why pursue the subject further? why attempt to lift the veil with which the All Merciful has been pleased to shut out from mortal ken the last sad hour of brave men battling with famine and disease?

All we know farther of this "forlorn hope" is, that

Dr Rae, from Esquimaux report, states that about *forty* white men were seen early one spring, dragging a boat and sledges south upon, or near, King William Land. The men were thin, and supposed to be short of provisions; the party was led by a stout middle-aged man. Later in the season, after the arrival of the wild-fowl (May), but before the ice broke up, the bodies of thirty persons, and some graves, were discovered on the continent, and five other corpses on an island; some of these bodies were in a tent, others under the boat, which had been turned over to afford shelter. Of those corpses seen on the island, one was supposed to be a chief; he had a telescope over his shoulders, and a double-barrelled gun beneath him. The native description of the locality where this sad scene was discovered agreed exactly with Montreal Island and Point Ogle, at the entrance of the Great Fish River; and knowing what we now do of the position of the ships and date of abandonment, and taking all circumstances into consideration, it is now vain to suppose that any survivors exist of the crews of the Erebus and Terror; nor is it likely that records of their voyage will now be found, as we may be assured that no Christian officers or men would for one moment think of dragging logs, books, or journals with them when they were obliged to abandon their dying comrades on King William Land: and, indeed, when it is remembered that they neither *cached* journals or books of any description at Cape Victory or the deserted boat, it is not probable that any were ever taken out of the vessels at a juncture when the sole object must have been to save life—and life only.

We will now briefly relate how a woman's devoted love, and a generous nation's sympathy, enabled us to weave together this feeble picture of a terrible yet glorious achievement, and at last cleared up the mystery which once hung over the voyage of Her Majesty's ships Erebus and Terror, and secured to Franklin and his followers the honour for which they died—that of being the *First Discoverers of the North-West Passage.*

CHAPTER V.

THE SEARCH FOR FRANKLIN.

"A lady with a lamp shall stand
In the great history of the land,
A noble type of good
Heroic womanhood."
—LONGFELLOW.

IN 1848 the public alarm at the long-continued absence of Franklin's expedition occasioned a search to be commenced. Sympathy for the missing ones not only extended to every class of Great Britain, but spread to Europe as well as America. The action of the British Admiralty not being considered sufficiently energetic, private expeditions were set on foot. Lady Franklin, in England, and the munificent American, Mr Grinnell, were the prime movers in either country. Men of science, and others who, in their anxiety to secure to their country the palm of maritime discovery, had encouraged the sending forth of the Franklin expedition, were in no wise remiss in pressing the Admiralty to persist in every effort to save the ill-starred crews. Sir John Barrow and his son were foremost in this movement. The Royal Society, and especially their talented Secretary, Colonel Sabine; Thomas Brown, the Linnæus

of England, who had sailed with Franklin when a boy, in Flinders's expedition to Australia; the great Humboldt, whose anxiety for further magnetical observations had much contributed to the despatch of Franklin's expedition; ay, even crowned heads, represented by our own much-loved Sovereign, expressed a warm interest, and stimulated the great cry of rescue which went through this earnest land.

The royal and mercantile navies of Britain offered hundreds of volunteers, ready to devote themselves to the chivalrous task of seeking and striving to save their missing countrymen. Expedition after expedition was sent for eleven long years, and although it was not ordained that any of Franklin's expedition should be rescued, yet we have now the satisfaction of knowing the history of their wonderful voyage, and feel that we have done our duty as a nation in having lifted the veil of mystery which once hung over their sad but glorious fate. Those who were first sent into those frozen seas knew no more than Franklin did on leaving England of the geography of the vast region between Lancaster Sound and Behring Strait; and in all that previously little-known area, many tens of thousands of square miles, they had to seek two atoms—two ships. The labour was long and disheartening; and, with the exception of the discovery in 1850 of Franklin's winter-quarters of 1845-46, under Beechey Island, no clue to their whereabouts was found until near the fall of 1854. That discovery at Beechey Island merely assured us that he was within the area above alluded to, and that his expedition had not perished, as some supposed, in Baffin

Bay. During those six years, however, the entire geography of the regions of arctic America was laid open; one ship's company, under M'Clure, actually entered by Behring Strait, and returned home by way of Baffin Bay; and, with the exception of a small portion around King William Land, every coast, creek, and harbour was thoroughly searched.

A comparison of the two charts we have given will best prove how much of this area was explored. It was the accomplishment of these explorations by the successive expeditions of Sir James Ross, Richardson, Rae, Austin, Penny, De Haven, Belcher, Collinson, M'Clure, and their gallant associates, that enabled Captain M'Clintock, as he very justly remarks, to confine his operations to a spot which, though last searched, happily proved to be the right one. It should be remembered, too, that these discoveries were nearly all made by our seamen and officers on foot, dragging sledges, on which were piled tents, provisions, fuel for cooking, and raiment. This arctic sledging was brought to perfection by Captain M'Clintock. He made his first journey in those regions under Sir James Ross in 1848 with the equipment then known to arctic navigators, and such as Franklin probably had, and was struck with its imperfections, and the total impossibility of making long journeys with *matériel* so clumsy, and entailing so much unnecessary labour upon the seamen. His suggestions were subsequently eagerly adopted, and in some cases improved upon by others; the consequence was, that whereas, in 1848, men were only able to remain away from our frozen-up ships forty days, and explore two

hundred miles of coast, those of Captain Horatio Austin's expedition in 1851 were away for eighty days, and went over eight hundred miles of ground. And in subsequent expeditions the journeys extended over a hundred and odd days, and distances were accomplished of nearly 1400 miles!

In spite of these improvements, the labour and hardship entailed upon our seamen by these sledge-journeys remained extremely severe; and none but those who have witnessed it can conceive the constant suffering it entailed upon our men, or the unflagging zeal and earnestness with which they underwent it year after year, in the hope of discovering their lost countrymen. There were two points to be ascertained by the officers conducting the search, in order to insure the utmost possible amount of work being done each season: the one was the maximum weight a strong man could drag through deep snow and over heavy ice for a consecutive number of days; the other was, to what temperature we could safely expose them, and upon how small a quantity of food.

The results obtained were curious. The maximum weight was ascertained to be 220 lb. per man; and of that weight 3 lb. per diem was consumed by each man for food and fuel—viz., 1 lb. of bread, 1 lb. of meat, while the other pound comprised his spirits, tea, cocoa, sugar, tobacco, and *fuel for cooking*. Upon this estimate it was found that, for a hundred days' journey, they could march ten miles per diem, and endure with impunity a temperature of fifty or sixty degrees below the freezing-point of water. These facts we offer

for the information of military authorities; and they should remember that our men dragged their tents with them, and that the country traversed was one vast desert, affording only water, while even that had to be thawed from snow, out of the daily modicum of fuel.

All this labour, however—all this generous expenditure of the legislature of England on behalf of her people, who entered deeply and earnestly into the sad question, What had become of Franklin?—brought back no information of his fate: and still further to test the perseverance which forms the best trait of our national character, the fall of 1854 witnessed the abandonment in icy seas of a noble expedition of four ships. It was indeed a catastrophe, though neither an officer nor a man was lost. The "I told you so" rang through the land of those who had long since got rid of the question by tumbling icebergs over on top of the Erebus and Terror; and those who felt convinced that the mystery would yet be unravelled, sighed, and knew not where to look for support. The skill and hardihood of the officers, the devotion and zeal of our sailors, and the accomplishment of the North-West Passage by Captain Sir Robert M'Clure, were accepted by the public as some consolation for the wounded maritime pride of Britain in the inconclusive allied war with Russia; but it was decided on the part of the Government that no farther search should be made for Franklin.

Hardly had official men declared the solution of the fate of the lost expedition a hopeless task, when in October 1854, from the shores of Prince Regent Inlet, appeared an arctic traveller, Dr Rae, bringing the infor-

mation which we narrated in the end of the last chapter, of the starvation of a forlorn hope of forty men and officers from the Erebus and Terror, at the mouth of the Great Fish River. The Esquimaux from whom he obtained his intelligence, told him that the two ships had been beset or wrecked off the coast of King William Land.

The lost expedition was thus reported to be in the centre of a square of unsearched ground. It would have been far more easily accessible to our various expeditions, whether by way of Barrow or Behring Strait, than many of the more remote regions which our sledge-parties had explored; but, by a strange fatality, all our travellers turned back short of the goal, King William Land, because they found no cairn, no trace, no record to induce them to push on towards it. However, that there the lost ships were, no one who knew anything of the matter could then doubt; and, of course, the natural conclusion under such circumstances was, that some one of the arctic ships in our dockyards would have been immediately sent to close the search in a satisfactory manner, even though all hope of saving life might be at an end. The Admiralty and Government thought otherwise; all public endeavours ceased; and, as is too often the case in Britain, private enterprise was left to crown the column which the devotion of a public profession had served to erect. At this juncture the widow of Franklin stepped forth to carry out what the admirals in Whitehall and statesmen in Downing Street declared to be an impossibility. This energetic, self-reliant lady, seconded by a few stanch friends, pre-eminent amongst

whom stood Sir Roderick Murchison, proceeded for the third time to try to carry out by private means what ignorance, rather than ill-will, prevented the Admiralty from executing; for after the death of Barrow and Beaufort, and the retirement of Admiral Hamilton, as well as Mr John Barrow, the son of the Secretary to the Admiralty, the only person left at the Board who understood the question was Admiral Sir Alexander Milne, and he stood alone, we believe, in voting for a final Government expedition. Lady Franklin's plan was to send a vessel down Prince Regent Inlet, or by Cape Walker, towards King William Land. Twice already had she been foiled in this identical scheme; though, on the last occasion, the discovery of Bellot Strait by Captain Kennedy, leading direct to King William Land, paved the way for her final effort.

An appeal to the public for pecuniary aid met with but partial success, and Lady Franklin had to sacrifice all her available property, and live humbly in lodgings, to enable her to meet the necessary expenses attendant on the purchase of a fine screw-schooner, the Fox, and her equipment for arctic service. Many able officers of the naval and mercantile marine came generously forward and volunteered their gratuitous services. Amongst the first was Captain George H. Richards; but hardly had his offer been accepted, when the Admiralty appointed him to the Plumper for a survey of Vancouver's Land. His place was almost immediately filled by Captain Leopold M'Clintock, whose high reputation during years of continuous service in those frozen seas rendered his acquisition an omen of perfect success.

Various circumstances combined to retard the departure of the gallant little Fox, and it was not until July 1857 that she and her noble company put forth from Aberdeen. Round Captain M'Clintock stood twenty-five gallant men, including three officers and an interpreter. Allen Young, a generous captain, of whom the merchant-service have good reason to be proud, went as sailing-master, and not only gave his services gratuitously, but threw £500 into the general fund for expenses. Lieutenant Hobson of the Navy served as chief officer, and Dr Walker of Belfast, a young and rising medical man, went also to seek honour where so many of his countrymen had already won it. Petersen, the Dane, who had spent half his life within the arctic zone, quitted Copenhagen at an hour's notice to aid Captain M'Clintock as Esquimaux interpreter; and amongst the men were many gallant sailors who had for years laboured under her Majesty's pendant in the frozen north.

The Fox before long reached the edge of that vast belt of broken-up ice which all the summer stretches across the upper portion of Baffin Bay, and is known under the general term of middle-ice. M'Clintock was late, the season unfavourable, his vessel a small one, yet he fought a gallant fight to make his way to Lancaster Sound. Repulsed in one quarter, we see him doubling back to another, the tiny Fox struggling with a sea of ice-fields and icebergs—stout hearts and strong hands carrying her and her company through many a hair-breadth escape. The middle-ice, however, is too strong for them. In an unlucky hour they are imprisoned, ice surrounds them, water even in holes becomes daily less,

winter sweeps down from her dreary home, and all that vast sea of broken ice becomes frozen together. They are beset for the winter, and must go with the ice wherever it pleases. Twenty-five men in a tiny craft drifting throughout that long dark winter, in the midst of ice-bergs and pack-ice which ever roll from the pole to the equator, was a strange and solemn spectacle. The calm and modest endurance of their six months' trial, as told by the gallant leader, is a thing to make one proud that such as they are our countrymen.

Late in April 1858, the Fox may again be seen; she has approached the open sea; a furious storm arises, sending huge rollers under the ice, which heaves and rears on all sides. A battle for life commences between the stout yacht and the charging floes. Under sail and steam, she works out against all obstacles, and, thanks to a taper bow, escapes the destruction which would infallibly have overtaken a vessel of bluffer build. The sea is sighted, and eventually entered; all on board the Fox are well—all in good spirits—one of the company has alone perished by an accident. Fortune ever smiles upon the resolute, and the middle-ice no longer barred the road to Lancaster Sound; by the end of July the Fox had reached its entrance. The hardy whaling-men of Aberdeen and Hull, who had just returned to their fishing-ground from home, cheered the little craft on with many a hearty "God-speed ye!" and shared with those on board the Fox their luxuries of frozen fresh beef and vegetables. Beyond the haunts of whale-fishermen, and beyond those even of the still hardier Esquimaux, the Fox must press on. Beechey Island is reached,

and from the depot of provisions left there by our naval expeditions, the now diminished stock of the schooner is replenished; and, favoured by an extraordinarily open season, Captain M'Clintock was able to reach Cape Walker, and pass down Peel Strait towards King William Land, until brought up on August 17, by fixed ice, at a point twenty-five miles within its entrance. Baffled, but not disheartened, Captain M'Clintock bethought himself of the route suggested by Lady Franklin, by way of Prince Regent Inlet and Bellot Strait; and with that decision which, combined with sound judgment, forms the most valuable qualification of an arctic navigator, he immediately retraced his steps, and by the 20th, or three days later, was at the eastern entrance of Bellot Strait, watching for a chance to push through it into the western sea around King William Land.

The scene in that strait was enough to daunt men less accustomed to such dangers. On either hand precipitous walls of granite, topped by mountains ever covered with snow, whilst to and fro, in the space between them, the ice was grinding and churning with great violence under the influence of a fierce tide. Like a terrier at a rat-hole, the stanch Fox waited for an opportunity to run the gauntlet through this strait. This perseverance was partially rewarded, for on the 6th September they were able to reach its western entrance, though again to be brought up by a belt of fixed ice which stretched across the path, and was held together by some islands named the Tasmania Group. The winter of 1858-59 now set in, and, much to the chagrin of those on board the Fox, all hope of reaching the western sea had to be aban-

doned, although separated from it by an ice-field only six miles wide. An unusually cold and stormy winter had now to be endured by men debilitated by a previous winter in the packed ice of Baffin Bay; and the resources of Boothia Felix yielded them in fresh food only eight reindeer, two bears, and eighteen seals. Against these privations, however, there was the knowledge that their position was an excellent one, and a perfect confidence that, with returning spring, they could march to King William Land, and solve the mystery of Franklin's fate.

On February 17, 1859, Captain M'Clintock and Captain Young left the Fox to establish advanced depots of provision for the summer sledge-parties, a necessary measure, which Lieutenant Hobson had been nearly lost in attempting to accomplish in the previous autumn. M'Clintock went south towards the magnetic pole, and Young westerly for Prince of Wales Land. On the 15th March they both returned to the Fox, somewhat cut up by the intense cold and privation; but the cheers which rang through the little craft told that a clue had indeed been obtained to the fate of the Erebus and Terror. M'Clintock had met forty-five Esquimaux, and, during a sojourn of four days amongst them, had learnt that "several years ago a ship was crushed by the ice off the north shore of King William Land, and her people landed and went away to the Great Fish River, where they died." These natives had a quantity of wood from a boat left by the "starving white men" on the Great River. The impatience of all on board the Fox to start with their sledges to the westward may be easily understood. The Esquimaux only said that *one* ship had

been sunk; this gave rise to the hope that the other vessel would be found, and obliged Captain M'Clintock to detach a party under Captain Young towards Prince of Wales Land, whilst he and Lieutenant Hobson went south for King William Land and the Fish River.

On the 2d of April the three officers left the ship with a man-sledge and a dog-sledge to each. Of Captain Young we may say that he made a most successful and lengthy journey, connecting the unexplored coast-lines of all the land to the northward and westward, and correcting its position, but without finding a single cairn or record left by Franklin. Captain M'Clintock and Hobson went together as far as the magnetic pole, and, before parting company, gathered from some natives that the second vessel, hitherto unaccounted for, had been drifted on shore by the ice in the fall of the same year that the other ship was crushed. Captain M'Clintock undertook to go down the east side of King William Land direct to the Fish River, and, taking up the clue which Dr Rae's report and Mr Anderson's journey to Montreal Island in 1855 afforded him, follow it whither it led. Hobson had to cross to the North Cape of King William Land, and push down the west coast as far as possible.

Captain M'Clintock, when half-way down the east coast of King William Land, met a party of Esquimaux who had been, in 1857, at the wreck spoken of by their countrymen. Their route to her had been across King William Land, and they readily bartered away all the articles taken out of her. An intelligent old woman said that it was in the fall of the year that the ship was forced on shore; that the starving white men had fallen

on their way to the Great River, and that their bodies were found by her countrymen in the following winter. She told that on board the wrecked ship there was one dead white man—"a tall man with long teeth and large bones." There had been "at one time many books on board of her, as well as other things; but all had been taken away or destroyed when she was last at the wreck."

The destruction of one ship and the wreck of the other appeared, so far as M'Clintock could ascertain, to have occurred subsequently to their abandonment. No Esquimaux that were met had ever before seen a living white man; and, although great thieves, they appeared to be in no wise alarmed at Captain M'Clintock or his men. From this party the gallant captain pushed on for Montreal Island; but he found nothing more than Anderson had reported; and in a careful sweep of the shores about Point Ogle and Barrow Island he was equally unsuccessful.

Returning to King William Land, he now struck along the south-western shores, in the hope of discovering the wreck spoken of by the natives at Cape Norton. She must, however, have been swept away by the ice in 1858, or sunk, for no signs of her could be discovered. The Esquimaux had evidently carried off every trace left by the retreating party between Cape Herschel and Montreal Island, except the skeleton of one man ten miles south of Cape Herschel, and the remains of a plundered cairn on the Cape itself. The skeleton lay exactly as the famished seaman had fallen, with his head toward the Great Fish River, and his face to the ground; and those who fancy that Fitzjames or Crozier would still

have dragged logbooks and journals to that river, must explain away the charge of common humanity which such an hypothesis involves, when they appeared not to have had time to turn over, much less to bury, their perishing comrades.

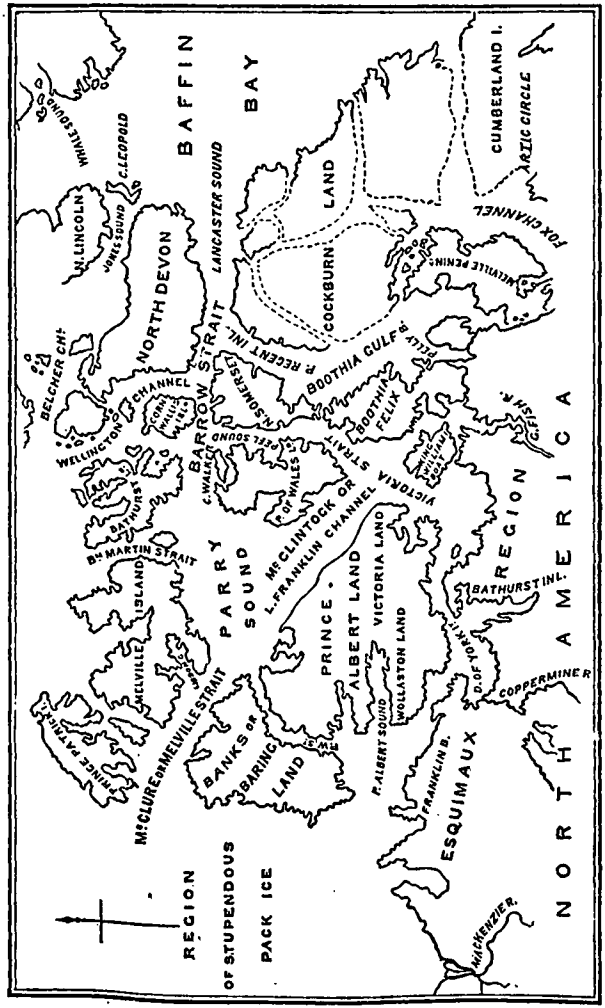
Beyond the western extremity of King William Land the Esquimaux appeared not to have travelled, and from thence to Cape Felix the beach was strewn with the wreck of that disastrous retreat of Franklin's people, of which we endeavoured in an earlier chapter to convey some idea.

There were one or two observations made by Captain M'Clintock and his Lieutenant that are full of deep meaning to those conversant with arctic exploration. In the first place, none of those coloured tins in which preserved fresh meat is usually packed were found anywhere along the trail of Franklin's crews, not even at what appeared to be a station for magnetical observations in 1847, at which officers and men must necessarily have been encamped for a considerable period. All relics of their food, such as bones, indicated that *salt meat* must have been their principal sustenance at this period, and such a dietary would have been certain death by scurvy to the unfortunate men, whose stock of preserved provisions had apparently become expended, or been found to be unfit for food, as most of the meats supplied to the navy at that period were found to be in other quarters of the globe. Had Franklin's parties had such meat-tins with them, they would infallibly have been found, for they abounded on the trail of their sledges about Beechey Island: and later arctic travellers

have left similar traces of their journeyings behind them, which will be recognised for many years to come by any visitors to the localities they have wandered over.

Another fact was noticed, and that was the total absence of all reserve stores of *provisions*, whether salted or fresh, although there was abundance of clothing left at Point Victory. This leads to the inference that they really had had none on board their ships, except what they could drag with them on their sledges, which we know could not have been more than was equal to *forty days'* consumption. Had there been food on board, it seems the height of improbability that Crozier and Fitzjames would, in the first place, have abandoned their ships so long before the Great Fish River was likely to break open, and equally strange that they should not have had the foresight to make a cache of provisions in store, where it would be safe from the risk of shipwreck, to which the Erebus and Terror became doubly liable after the officers and men had abandoned them.

All this, we think, points to two grand facts: that, in the first place, their preserved meats had long been consumed, or become unfit for consumption; and that, in the second place, *they quitted the ships because all their salt meat and provisions were expended.* Lieutenant Hobson had of course forestalled Captain M'Clintock in the discoveries made here; but what with the search made by that officer both on his outward and homeward march, as well as that subsequently carried out by Captain M'Clintock over the same ground, there cannot be much reason to suppose that any undiscovered documents exist; and those who know anything of those regions


BAFFIN BAY
NORTH AMERICA
REGION OF STUPENDOUS PACK ICE
REGION
BARROW STRAIT
LANCASTER SOUND
NORTH DEVON
PRINCE PATRICK
MELVILLE ISLAND
PARRY SOUND
PRINCE ALBERT LAND
VICTORIA LAND
WOLLASTON LAND
BANKS OF BARING LAND
M.CLURE & MELVILLE STRAIT
M.CLINTOCK OR L. FRANKLIN CHANNEL
VICTORIA STRAIT
BOOTHIA GULF
BOOTHIA FELIX
COCKBURN LAND
CUMBERLAND I.
ARCTIC CIRCLE
FOX CHANNEL
M'KELLAR PENINS.
N. LINCOLN
C. LEOPOLD
WHALE SOUND
JONES SOUND
BELCHER CHI.
WELLINGTON CHANNEL
WELLINGTON
CORNWALLIS I.
BARROW STRAIT
SOMERSET I.
PRINCE REGENT INL.
PELLY B.
C. WALKER
P. OF WALES STRAIT
P. OF WALES I.
BOOTHIA FELIX
BACK R.
FISH R.
CHESTERFIELD INL.
BATHURST I.
MELVILLE I.
BATHURST INL.
D. OF YORK I.
COPPERMINE R.
P. ALBERT SOUND
FRANKLIN B.
ESQUIMAUX
M'KENZIE R.

will agree with Captain M'Clintock in believing that all hope is now at an end of finding any one living of the unfortunate crews of the Erebus and Terror. With respect to the existence of abundance of animal life on King William Land, the fact that only forty natives in all were found living on that island by Captain M'Clintock, ought to be pretty conclusive; and, furthermore, had game been plentiful anywhere within a hundred miles of the Erebus and Terror, it is not likely that those poor fellows would have quitted their ships in a season so rigorous, and so long before the Great Fish River would be open for navigation. We should be the last to say this if there were a shadow of foundation for further hope, either to save life or to obtain such records as would throw more light on the labours and zeal of those gallant ships' companies.

As those men fell in their last sad struggle to reach home, their prayer must have been that their countrymen might learn how nobly they accomplished the task they had voluntarily undertaken. That prayer has been granted. As long as Britain exists, or our language is spoken, so long will be remembered and related the heroic fate of the crews of the Erebus and Terror, and how they died in the execution of their duty to their Queen and country.

THE END.

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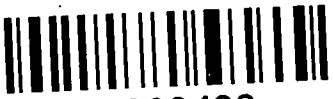
MAP SHEWING THE TRACK OF H.M.S. PIONEER IN SEARCH OF SIR JOHN FRANKLIN 1850 - 1852

GREENLAND
Cape Farewell
BAFFIN BAY
DAVIS STRAIT
Northumberland Str
Cumberland Str
Frobisher B
Hudson Str
LABRADOR
Melville Peninsula
Fox Channel
Boothia Peninsula
Regent Inlet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